

the chronicle

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Councillor to quit post for time with family

A leading Dudley councillor has quit her post after two-and-a-half years and plans to stand down from the authority at the next election.

Councillor Lesley Faulkner, who has served on Dudley Council representing Halesowen North since 2003, made the announcement on Monday. She has served as cabinet member for adult and community services for two-and-a-half years.



Lesley Faulkner

Councillor Faulkner said it had been an "honour" to serve on the council but she now wanted to spend more time with her grandchildren.

Halesowen South councillor David Vickers will take over her role in adult and community services from his existing position in children's services.

Councillor Liz Walker will continue to be the cabinet lead for children's services. Councillor Faulkner said: "I made my decision some weeks ago not to stand again at the next local elections in May 2012. After, I realised just how important it was to hand over my cabinet duties as soon as possible to give my successor the chance to become familiar with the roles and responsibilities."

"I would like to thank everyone for the support they have given me over the years and I wish Councillor Vickers well in his important new role."

Olly gives fans a treat at launch

By Sarah Hazelwood

POP heart throb Olly Murs gave 300 screaming fans an exclusive performance to mark the launch of this year's BRMB Live. The show took place at the Merry Hill shopping centre, on Sunday.

Olly, who was runner-up in X Factor in 2009, is now fronting Xtra Factor meaning he is unable to perform at this year's BRMB event which features some of the best acts in pop.



Olly singing

Three thousand fans, old and young, applied to attend the launch party which also featured girl band Parade.

Sporting his trademark trilby Olly hot-footed across the stage singing tracks including Please Don't Let Me Go and his latest chart topper Heart Skips a Beat.

Keeping tight-lipped about this year's final 12, the platinum selling artist is embracing life on the other side of the judges.

"X Factor has given me the most amazing platform and I love what I'm doing," he said.

"I'm really backing the groups this year but they're all great and over the next few weeks viewers will see some real characters emerge."

"This year has been incredible and exceeded all expectations, I've got so much more to give and hopefully I will become one of the biggest artists in the country."

Olly's second album is due out in November. Pixie Lott was announced as the first act for this year's concert which will be held at the LG Arena on November 26. Tickets are on sale from www.theticketfactory.co.uk or by calling 0844 338 8000.

Boy rugby tackled knifeman during frenzied attack

TEENAGER BEN HELPED SAVE CHLOE

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A HERO teenager has been praised by a judge for helping to save the life of a girl who was victim to a "vicious and frenzied" attack as she walked to school in the Stourbridge.

Chloe West, aged 14, was stabbed 20 times by 18-year-old Samuel Gayzer-Tomlinson. On Friday he was given a 13-year custodial sentence after admitting attempted murder and unlawful wounding.



Victim - Chloe West

She was only saved when 16-year-old Ben Hudson ignored the threat to his own safety and rugby tackled Gayzer-Tomlinson to the ground.

Ben suffered cuts to his hands from the Sin kitchen knife the attacker was wielding.

Gayzer-Tomlinson planned the attack after his victim spurned his advances, the court heard.

But judge John Warner told Ben his actions saved the life of Chloe, a fellow pupil at Ridgewood High School in Wollaston.

He said: "Without the actions of Ben Hudson, who should be praised, and others this could have been a lot worse."



Hero - Ben Hudson

Punched

The court was told Gayzer-Tomlinson, of Turlis Hill Road, Sedgley, stabbed, kicked and punched Chloe in a planned revenge attack.

Scores of horrified schoolchildren saw the attack in Park Road West as they headed to lessons on April 1.

The court heard Ben tackled Gayzer-Tomlinson and pinned him to the ground to allow Chloe to escape. But he managed to break free and stab her another two times.

Miraculously, none of her wounds were life-threatening.

He had struck up a friendship with Chloe after they met at stables, but became angry when she lost interest.

Gayzer-Tomlinson, who admitted all charges, was sentenced to 12 years for attempted murder, plus one year for wounding.

He was given two years for possession of the knife, to run concurrently.

After the case, Ben said: "I am sure the impact of that day in April will remain with us all for a very long time."



Attacker - Samuel Tomlinson

Disguise - page 2

Fans in raptors of delight



Joshua Price, aged eight, from Halesowen, examines a velociraptor's skull

Hundreds visited Dudley Museum and Dudley Concert Hall to see fossils and treasures from the prehistoric era.

Stalls selling rocks, minerals, fossils and gems mixed with displays of ancient bones and dinosaur parts, as well as games and activities for children.

There was even the leg of a woolly mammoth, which was on sale for £250. Exhibitions

officer Adrian Durkin said the Dudley Rock and Fossil Festival had gone "marvellously well". He added: "We had lots of people dropping by - and a lot of people who came on the Saturday actually paid to come in again on the Sunday as they enjoyed it so much."

"A lot of the stalls were looking empty by Saturday evening and the traders had to restock."

Hopes of solution in parking row

Hopes have been boosted that parking problems in roads surrounding a Dudley hospital will finally be solved as councillors are set to approve new restrictions.

The plans to deter drivers from parking in streets near Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley have been drafted with the help of residents.

Locals say visitors and staff are parking on their roads to avoid charges in the hospital. And they claim the problem has persisted even since the opening of a new 691-space car park at the site.

Under the plans, access would be restricted in some roads other than for residents, while parking would be banned in others.

The proposals are set to be rubber-stamped by Central Dudley Area Committee on October 4. They will then go before all members of Dudley Council later this year.

Residents have complained for years that their streets are clogged with cars - and some even say access to their driveways has been blocked.

Christina Brett, a 38-year-old mother of five from Byron Street, said: "I'm glad something is finally happening as this is such a big problem. It's getting worse if anything so the sooner they stop people from parking around here the better."

The council recently held a public consultation and received 120 messages from householders supporting the plans. But bosses at Russells Hall opposed the idea, saying they plan to introduce more spaces on their site.

The proposals include restricted access to Pearce Close, Dereton Close, Abbottsford Drive, Hilderic Crescent and Elgar Crescent and waiting restrictions in Middlepark Road.

Bypass high on danger list

The Dudley Southern Bypass has been revealed as one of the Black Country's most dangerous roads.

New data from the West Midlands Casualty Reduction Scheme has uncovered some of the region's worst accident blackspots and show in total, 18 people have died in crashes on routes throughout the Black Country between June last year and this May.

The figures show that in Dudley there were 508 crashes with four fatalities.

The Dudley Southern Bypass, also known as Duncan Edwards Way, ranked as the borough's worst blackspot, with 17 incidents.

A 31-year-old driver died following a crash there in August last year.

Crashes at the site often bring the route to a standstill. Queues tailed back to the Birmingham Road after a smash earlier this month near Flood Street Island.

Work is currently taking place to reduce the Cinder Bank island to two lanes.

Opposition leader Councillor David Sparks today called for urgent action to make the strip of road safer.

"The Dudley Southern Bypass itself is an extremely safe road," he said.

"However, the roundabout at Cinder Bank continues to be a death trap. Traffic lights need to be installed as a matter of urgency," he added.

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Garage burglar is sentenced

A burglar who stole two speakers from garages while on licence has been sent back to prison for 64 days.

Daniel Tonks, of Nelson Road, Dudley, had been released on licence six months into a 12-month sentence from Wolverhampton Crown Court for burgling a house.

The 21-year-old pleaded guilty to burglary at a garage in Trinity Street in Cradley Heath on July 26 and possessing cannabis before the term of his sentence had ended, at Sandwell Magistrates Court on September 20.

Mrs Virinder Baines, prosecuting, said: "In interview he said he saw the garage doors were unlocked and helped himself to the Kenwood stereo speakers."

Mr Kirandeep Soor, defending, said Tonks was remorseful and added: "He has a partner of 18 months and she is six months pregnant. He is looking forward to fatherhood."

Tonks was sentenced to 28 days for the burglary and a further 36 days in prison for committing an offence while on licence to be served consecutively.

Crystal shop is set to reopen

The former Stuart Crystal shop in Wordsley is to be reopened as four craft or retail studios.

Dudley Council bought the shop along with the Red House Glass Cone last year as part of wider plans to create a new glass museum for Dudley at the Stuart Crystal factory site. Bosses plan to spend £90,000 on repairing the shop to bring it back into use.

Disguise used in plot to kill schoolgirl, aged 14

It started as any normal day for teenage schoolgirl Chloe West. But for Samuel Gayzer-Tomlinson, the teenager who was "obsessed" with her, it had been anything but.

He had dyed his hair black and traded in his spectacles for contact lenses in an attempt to disguise his appearance as he plotted to kill her.

Within just a few moments, the quiet Friday morning was torn apart when Gayzer-Tomlinson launched a vicious, frenzied attack, stabbing her an estimated 20 times in the face,



Chloe West who was stabbed nine times

chest, neck and arms. She was knifed, punched and kicked as she lay on the ground, desperately trying to shield her face from her attacker, before heroic fellow pupil Ben Hudson and three teachers intervened to drag him off her.

They became friends, and while they rarely met up socially they would regularly text one another or message via Facebook or instant messenger service MSN.

Miss Sarah-Jayne Buckingham, defending Gayzer-Tomlinson, said that despite their relationship being "purely platonic", he had become "intensely emotionally attached" to Chloe, and said he had believed he was in love with her.

So when, at the start of this year, she began to pull away from the relationship – not taking his

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calls and not replying to messages – he became desperate, even setting up two fake Facebook profiles to try and get in touch with her.

"His whole world collapsed," she told the hearing.

It was then, the court heard, he started to plan his revenge.

Despite not holding a driver's licence, in March he bought a Volkswagen Golf along with two fake number plates copied from other similar cars he had spotted around the Sedgley area.

Chloe was walking along Park Road West, Wollaston, Stourbridge, towards Ridgewood High School at 8.45am on the morning of April 1 when Gayzer-Tomlinson approached her in a semi-disguise, having dyed his hair black and put contact lenses in instead of wearing glasses.

The 14-year-old told him to "get lost", at which point he grabbed her in a headlock and began to punch her and stab her.

Intervene

A parent tried to intervene but he shrugged her off and, as Chloe fell to the floor, he kicked her in the back of the head and continued to stab her.

Ben Hudson, hearing her screams, saw Gayzer-Tomlinson straddling her and at first thought he was punching her viciously – but soon realised there was a 20cm kitchen knife in his hands.

He heroically rugby-tackled him to the ground and pinned him there as Gayzer-Tomlinson struggled to get free, trying to cut his arms and managing to cut his hands before finally kicking him off.

In the Golf, parked nearby, police found a rucksack containing £185 cash, masking tape, a petrol container and a map to Snowdon.

He told police, "Yeah, I know I did it. I did it because she left."

Chloe, who was released from hospital just a day after her ordeal, has since made an impressive recovery.

Gayzer-Tomlinson, aged 18, of Turls Hill Road, Sedgley, was sentenced to 13 years behind bars at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

He pleaded guilty to charges of attempted murder, possession of an offensive weapon, and wounding of Ben Hudson.

Chloe's parents relieved justice has been done



Parents Nigel and Rose West with Ben Hudson outside the court

The parents of Chloe West have spoken of their relief after the teenager who attacked their daughter was jailed and banned from ever contacting her again.

Rose and Nigel West, of Park Road, Wollaston, said the past few months had been "horrible" for their entire family.

"We have had this hanging over us since April 1, when Chloe was attacked. We are in no doubt that Chloe would have been killed but for the brave intervention of Ben, Sonia, Mr Simmons and Mr Ramsey, who prevented her attacker continuing his horrific attack with no thought to their own safety," they said.

"It is hard to come to terms with the thought of someone wishing to kill our daughter. Even harder to know that this attack was premeditated."

"We wish to thank again all of the emergency services who attended to Chloe, to the air ambulance who took her so quickly to the Children's Hospital, to the doctors, nurses and surgeons who treated her at the hospital

helping her to make a remarkable recovery," they said in a statement released through police.

"Our thanks to Clive Nutting, headmaster of Ridgewood High School, for the way the school responded and to the staff and students for their support and wishes."

"Also thanks to family, friends and colleagues who have given us so much support over the past months. Today brings an end to what has been a horrible time for us. Chloe's attacker is now behind bars and we feel justice has been done, we can now move on to enjoy life and watch Chloe grow into a young woman who is full of life."

Heroic fellow pupil Ben Hudson, who came to Chloe's aid and rugby tackled Gayzer-Tomlinson to stop his "frenzied" attack on her, was praised by the court for his actions.

Afterwards, the 16-year-old said: "I am pleased that Samuel Tomlinson chose to plead guilty and spared many the ordeal of having to give evidence in court. I am delighted that Chloe appears to be making a good recovery."

Temporary workers cost £8m

More than £8 million has been spent on agency staff by cash-strapped Dudley Council in the last two years.

The children's services department racked up the biggest bill for agency workers, spending £2.1m last year.

Dudley Council is looking to shed more than 400 jobs by next April as part of a bid to save £22m.

The move is part of wider plans to axe a total of 800 jobs at the local authority over the next three years. Around 350 people have left the council through voluntary redundancy while around 25 have gone through compulsory redundancy.

Figures released to the through the Freedom of Information Act show a total of £4.7m was spent on temporary staff last year by the local authority.

Borough bosses have taken a number of steps in recent months in an attempt to try and cut the amount spent on agency staff.

In July officials agreed to take on the equivalent of 12 full-time social workers to cut the agency staff bill.

Police service for students

School children across Dudley will now be able to receive police messages as well as crime prevention advice every time they log on to their school computer.

Police chiefs say as part of the scheme, seasonal crime prevention, personal safety and reassurance messages can now be sent to approximately 50,000 students and staff attending 112 schools across the borough.



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Race against time to help little Charlie

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At one year old, brave Charlie Harris-Beard is battling more than most would in a lifetime as he undergoes intensive chemotherapy for two forms of leukaemia.

His family, from Kidderminster, are now facing a race against time to find a bone marrow donor after tests discovered that none of them was a suitable match.

"We are just hoping that as many people as possible come forward. The more that do, the more likely we are to find a match," said Charlie's mother, 29-year-old Fiona Harris.

"We need to find a donor in the next couple of months to give him the best chance."

Miss Harris, Charlie's father Joe Beard, and his older sister, have all been tested but are not suitable matches.

The family have made only fleeting visits to their home since Charlie was diagnosed on Easter Sunday, and have all but moved in to the family unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Worry

Miss Harris said that when Charlie was just four weeks old, they noticed lumps on his neck, groin, arms, stomach and head – but doctors told them not to worry.

"The story changed from an infection, to teething, to a tummy bug. They kept telling us there was nothing to worry about," she said.

"By earlier this year he was that poorly I couldn't even move his legs to change his nappy, and on Easter Sunday we took him to hospital."

Charlie was rushed to Birmingham Children's Hospital and tests confirmed he had two kinds of leukaemia – agnogenic myeloid metaplasia, and acute myeloid leukaemia, an aggressive strain.

"It was just like my heart was being ripped out," Miss Harris said.

"It has massively affected our life. We thought his chemotherapy would be over by now but he relapsed so is now having to undergo another bout."

"It's likely he will be here until after Christmas."

Mr Beard worked for the Royal Mail but has quit to be with the family. And Charlie's older sister, Ellie-Louise, 11, has been living with her grandparents.

To find out more about donating bone marrow, see the British Bone Marrow Registry at the website www.nhsbt.nhs.uk

Old school lesson for pupils



Julie Lawton, headteacher at Wolverhampton Girls School, with back from left, sixth formers Olivia Hawe, Phoebe Hazen, Emily Nelson and Isabelle Bolton

Pupils and teachers from a Wolverhampton school took a trip back in time to find out what life was like in the classroom 100 years ago.

All 720 pupils and 50 staff from Wolverhampton Girls High School donned Edwardian dress for the nostalgic event at Black Country Living Museum.

Julie Lawton, headteacher of the school which is celebrating its centenary year, said: "With the current range of technology our pupils can call upon today, it was quite an eye-opener for them to have just a slate and a piece of chalk in the museum's schoolroom."

"The museum is marvellous for its representation of the era when our school was formed and they provided guides for our pupils to visit all the attractions. I think many of the other visitors to the museum enjoyed seeing our girls and staff in their costumes and really entering into the spirit of it all."

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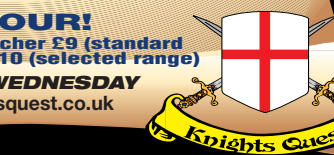
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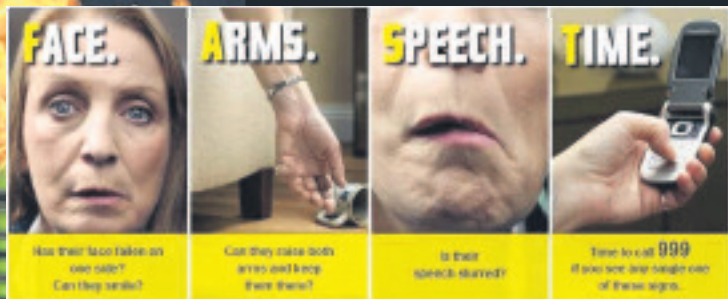
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Leaders may fight mosque decision

Muslim leaders in Dudley have said they were considering appealing the decision taken by the borough council to throw out proposals for a controversial multi-million mosque and community centre.

Dudley Muslim Association chairman, Dr Khurshid Ahmed, said he felt an appeal would be lodged once discussions were held in the next week.

Members of the 15-strong Dudley

Muslim Association board will meet once an official confirmation letter arrives from Dudley Council detailing the reasons for refusal.

Dr Ahmed, said he personally would be advising members to appeal the rejection by councillors at a recent planning meeting. "My own view is that we will look to appeal the decision," he said.

"We were not given the opportunity

to address any of the committees' concerns."

On September 19, Dudley Council's Development Control planning committee refused to grant permission for the mosque to be built on land off Hall Street. Dr Ahmed rejects claims made by members of the committee saying it would be a "blot on the landscape" or not in keeping with the "medieval" features of the town.

New ward creates 30 jobs

A new inpatient ward has opened at Rowley Regis Hospital.

The Moor Lane hospital has been without inpatient beds since June when McCarthy ward, which used to contain those beds, was earmarked for closure.

After a petition of around 1,000 names, the new Henderson Unit has now opened in its place, creating 30 jobs.

The ward welcomed 10 patients last week and a further 22 beds are due to open by mid-October.

The unit aims to treat people who no longer need help from doctors, but still require care from nurses and therapists.

Stan Ginnifer was the first person welcomed onto the new unit. The 84-year-old grandfather-of-six and former Royal Navy sailor, who lives with wife Olive, is having therapy after suffering a hernia and having major surgery two years ago on his stomach.

He said: "It's a great idea inpatients' facilities are back at Rowley Regis Hospital. The service is very good."



Front, new unit team leader Emily Hoffman with her fellow staff members

Trapped man, 67, rescued from fire

A pensioner was rescued from his Stourbridge flat after becoming trapped in his living room by a severe fire sparked by a candle.

Fire crews used a ladder to reach the 67-year-old and bring him to safety after the blaze tore through the hallway at his flat in School Drive, Ambleside, at around 3am on September 22.

The hall connects all of the rooms of the property and left the man with no way to escape after the fire started to spread.

Fire crews put the ladder to the window and officers wearing breathing equipment climbed up and brought him down to safety. He was treated by paramedics for smoke inhalation and was later taken to hospital as a precaution.

While the rescue was taking place another group of firefighters broke through the door and tackled the blaze in the hallway.

Five neighbouring flats had to be evacuated.

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Charity rescued with Lotto grant

A charity that supports sex assault victims in Dudley and Sandwell has been brought back from the brink thanks to a generous lottery cash grant.

The future had been looking bleak for Sandwell Women's Aid, which was forced to axe its counselling service, and reduce the support which it offers, due to a lack of funding.

But now, thanks to £349,311 from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities fund, the group's future for the next three years has been secured.

"We were near to breaking point. But now, thanks to this grant, we are no longer on a knife edge," said

charity executive director Sara Ward. "We're absolutely delighted."

Sandwell Women's Aid has been supporting vulnerable victims in the borough and Dudley for the past five years.

But its future was left uncertain when Sandwell Council announced that under cutbacks, it would have to withdraw £120,000 of the charity's annual £150,000 grant.

This prompted the charity to axe its counselling service in March, with 14 counsellors being forced to leave.

The lack of funding also put the jobs of three other workers at the charity in doubt.

But now, thanks to the lottery boost, those three jobs are secure, and Sandwell Women's Aid can relaunch the counselling service next year.

Although it is not yet clear how many jobs will be available, a recruitment drive is due to take place, with those counsellors who lost their jobs set to be asked to return.

Mrs Ward added: "This is amazing news. After all the threats to the service we truly feel like we have won the lottery."

Sandwell Women's Aid has announced the news as it launches its Teenage Relationship Abuse Programme.

Anti-social behaviour on the rise

Reported crimes in some towns across the West Midlands rose steadily over a three-month period, new figures have revealed. Anti-social behaviour was the most often reported crime in the region.

An increase in anti-social behaviour was reported in the many town centres between May and July.

The figures, published on website police.uk, show the overall number of street-level crimes and anti-social behaviour reported in Dudley have risen.

In Dudley, 356 crimes were reported in May, 400 in June and 457 in July. Anti-social behaviour rose from 161 incidents to 200 during this period. Crime reported in West Bromwich increased from 418 in May, to 439 in June and 487 in July.

In Wolverhampton there were 677 crimes reported in May, 682 in June and 678 in July. In Stafford the figures were 271 in May and 286 in June.

Walsall and Cannock bucked the trend with incidents falling during the period.

New £1.8m sports hall opens

A £1.8 million sports hall which is set to be used by more than 1,000 schoolchildren as well as members of the community has been opened to members of the public.

Ellowes Hall Sports College, in Lower Gornal, cut the ribbon on the centre at a special ceremony attended by staff, pupils and civic dignitaries.

The facility is equipped for sports including football, netball and badminton.

Senior

School youngsters will be able to use the site for PE lessons and it is hoped sports groups from across the region will use the centre as well with karate groups already booked in to use the venue.

The hall was officially opened by senior policy adviser for PE and Sport at the Department of Education Ian Broadbridge.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin and the borough's deputy mayor Councillor Doreen Ameson were also in attendance at the official opening. Staff and youngsters let off balloons at the end of the ceremony to mark the occasion.

Construction of the new centre started last autumn.



Head Andy Griffiths with Dudley's deputy mayor Doreen Ameson, consort Jeff Ameson, sports prefect Heidi Kempton and Montel Bell, deputy head boy

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thechronicle

Ex-soldier in court over £18,000 fraud

dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk

A former soldier from Halesowen who fraudulently claimed almost £18,000 in benefits while working as a cleaner has been ordered to carry out unpaid work in the community.

Gary Petford, aged 54, is now back on incapacity benefits despite his cheating record – but the Department of Work and Pensions is deducting the money he obtained fraudulently from his payments.

Petford, of Stourbridge Road, admitted four fraudulent claims totalling £17,775 worth of incapacity, housing and council tax benefits. Dudley magistrates ordered him to pay £100 towards the prosecution costs.

Admitted

Miss Claire Beddow, prosecuting, said Petford initially started claiming incapacity benefit legally in September 1993 after suffering a broken wrist.

But, the Department of Work and Pensions discovered that, from August 2008 to November 2009, he had been working as a cleaner for Manheim Europe.

When he was interviewed, Petford admitted he had previously been a cleaner at Birmingham University from November 2006 to January 2008.

Miss Beddow said the department is making deductions from the incapacity benefit he now receives for having diabetes and blood pressure problems to recover the money he claimed wrongly.

Mr Richard Burch, defending, said Petford made the false claims to get money for his 80-year-old mother who had financial and health problems.

Gary Petford, who swindled nearly £18,000

Demolition starts at former glass factory



Workers begin demolition of the old Royal Brierley Crystal building next to the Black Country Museum

The former Royal Brierley Crystal building is being demolished to make way for a £6 million home for the borough's archives.

Diggers and bulldozers have entered the site, in Tipton Road, to rip down the historic building.

Once cleared the site will be transformed into a home for Dudley and Sandwell archives as part of a £6 million project.

Tipton firm Humphries Demolition Ltd moved on to site in August to carry out preparation work for the demolition got

fully underway. Just days before the workers moved on site, the roof of the building, next to the Black Country Living Museum, was badly damaged in an arson attack.

Councillor Adrian Turner

of Dudley Council said: "Subject to the plans going through we are looking forward to providing the people of Dudley and neighbouring boroughs the benefit of a state-of-the-art archives facility. It is a fantastic building and it is a landmark site."

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thechronicle

Charity to highlight woman's tragic death

dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk

The death of a young woman following "consistent failings" in care at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital will be used as a case study by a national medical negligence charity, it has emerged.

Wendy Nock, aged 35, died just eight days after being admitted and Black Country coroner Mr Robin Balmain criticised the hospital for a "lack of continuity of care". Wendy's father Harold, aged 63, has campaigned against the hospital since her death in September 2009.

The General Medical Council and an independent review both criticised the care his daughter received, but took no action.

He has launched legal action against medical staff at the hospital, and referred the case to the Action against Medical Accidents charity.

And the charity's bosses today said they wanted to use Wendy's case as part of a campaign warning against self-regulation in the NHS.

Criticisms

Senior advice worker Tracy Minns said: "Despite the criticisms made by all those who have reviewed the case, the GMC did not even issue a warning. "We would like to use Wendy's case as an illustration of the shortcomings of self-regulation."

In an inquest, coroner Mr Balmain said that Wendy died from an intestinal obstruction with contributing factors of a rare blood clotting condition and spina bifida.

He said nursing staff had not kept proper records about her condition, and said the management of her charts had been "unacceptable".

"It was a consistent failing amongst different departments and a number of different staff," he said.

GMC investigator Neil Ineson said in a report: "The care...was in my opinion seriously deficient."

The independent review, conducted by Professor P J Guillou, found a series of failures including not conducting proper tests.

He said a CT scan might have identified the bowel obstruction.

He added: "On the balance of probabilities, she would have survived."

Fear over worn-out signs



Graham Pritchard is campaigning for the council to repair or replace worn-out signs in Wolverhampton Road, Kingswinford

Road signs left to fade due to sunlight, dirt from passing traffic and age are putting lives at risk as confused motorists don't know where they are going, residents have claimed.

Retired hairdresser Graham Pritchard, who lives in Kingswinford, said he had been lobbying Dudley Council for months about the issue, claiming the signs were becoming a "real problem".

"It has been 18 months since I first realised that the signposts were getting rather worn and not very clear," said the grandfather-of-one from Charterfields. "It's very confusing for drivers. It's happening at the junction of some fairly major roads, including at The Cross, Wolverhampton Road and at the junction of Stallings Lane. For any visitors to the area it doesn't look very good at all and could end up causing a crash."

Transport councillor Patrick Harley said the council was aware of the issue and promised the signs would be replaced when funding became available. "We will of course respond to specific complaints from members of the public about road signs and make repairs where funds allow," he said.

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thechronicle

Plea for end to lights misery

Calls have been made to tear up traffic lights blamed for severe queues on a busy Black Country main road after plans to remove them failed to materialise.

Dudley Council announced the signals at the junction of Amblecote High Street and Trefoil Gardens, in Stourbridge, would be axed following complaints from residents. A consultation period was launched to gauge opinion of the scheme, but councillors have said while everyone "fully supported" removal of the lights, no work had yet been carried out.

Officers are now being urged to take action and remove the signals at

the earliest opportunity. The lights were originally installed to help residents on The Spire estate access the main road more easily.

But instead they have caused traffic congestion at peak times along the stretch of road which has three sets of traffic lights within a few hundred yards. Queues can build up along Stourbridge ring road back to Wordsley at busy times.

Amblecote councillor Liz Walker said she could see "absolutely no reason" why the lights had not already been removed.

"Consultation was carried out and to my knowledge there was no protest

at all about this particular set of lights being removed," she said. "Even residents in The Spire did not object to the removal and the lights were designed to help them. This in itself speaks volumes."

"From what I have been told they are absolutely fed-up with the congestion this set of lights has caused over the years. There is absolutely no reason why this work has not taken place. I think it should be carried out with all haste."

The two other sets of traffic lights at the High Street's junctions with Vicarage Road and Mill Race Lane will remain in place.

Auction delight for daughters

The two daughters of Walsall boxer Jack Hood are "absolutely delighted" that his treasured Lonsdale Belt will stay in the Black Country after being snapped up by millionaire Tony Whittaker. "We feel it's gone home," said daughter Jill Baldwin.

Mrs Baldwin and her sister, Jackie Hodgkinson, decided to put the heirloom on the market because, after almost 20 years in a bank vault, they wanted to raise money to pay for a treat for his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mrs Baldwin and Mrs Hodgkinson have yet to decide what that treat will be. "We are absolutely delighted that Tony Whittaker has our father's Lonsdale Belt because we were concerned that it might go abroad," said Mrs Baldwin.

"We met Tony at the auction and he's a lovely man." Mrs Baldwin described her father, who was born in Walsall and later lived in Hall Green, Birmingham, as a "modest" man but said he was very proud of his boxing achievements.

Yow cor 'ave Jack's belt, says boss

Millionaire Tony Whittaker has snapped legendary Black Country boxer "Gentleman Jack" Hood's Lonsdale Belt from the jaws of American bidders - and forked out £36,000 to keep it in the Black Country.

And the 60-year-old has turned down telephone offers to "name his price" to sell it on.

"I'm telling the Yanks - yow cor 'ave it," said Tony, who owns the Delph Industrial Estate in Brierley Hill. "Jack Hood's Lonsdale belt is stopping in the Black Country with us. I've told his daughters I will not let it go out of the Black Country and will pick them up so they can come and see it whenever they like."

The belt was put up for sale at Fellows & Sons' auction room in Augusta Street, Birmingham, by the two daughters of Jack Hood, who was known as "Gentleman Jack" because of his generous and charismatic nature in and out of the ring.

Tony, who lives in Wall Heath, said: "I had a standing ovation in the room when I bought it."

Tony added that, due to the value of the belt, he would keep it in a bank vault but would bring it out for special occasions.



Jack Hood with the Lonsdale Belt that millionaire Tony Whittaker has now bought for £36,000




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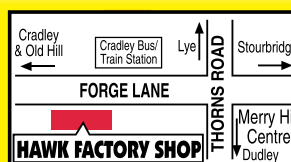
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thechronicle

Police begin drinking louts ban

Police in Brierley Hill have called "time" on people drinking in the street – and have started banning them from the area. The neighbourhood team has launched a campaign.

Notices will be issued banning people from several town centre streets if they are spotted acting antisocially.

The neighbourhood officers decided to act after spotting a group regularly congregating and drinking in High Street, annoying shoppers and disrupting businesses.

Police have introduced powers allowing officers to order drinkers to leave the area immediately.

They will be banned from returning for a length of time which is decided by the police officer concerned.

The length of the ban varies but is usually up to two days.

Besides the High Street, other roads affected by the notice are Bell Street South, Pearson Street, Venture Way and all pubs in the area.

Issued

Pc Ross Morgan, of the Brierley Hill neighbourhood team, said: "If people have been issued with a notice they are required to leave the location immediately and will be excluded from the locality for a period of time."

"This will be decided by the issuing officer but it can be anything up to 48 hours."

"If they return to the location before the agreed time frame they will be arrested."

A group of around 10 people, ranging in age from 20 to 50, have been noticed regularly drinking in public in the area.

Local people can follow initiatives by the neighbourhood team at www.dudleypolice.org.uk, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/dudleypolice and Twitter at www.twitter.com/dudleypolice

Village for the retired planned

Plans to build a third Dudley retirement village are under way on the site of a former high school in Halesowen, it has emerged.

Housing giant Midland Heart said it was carrying out preparatory work on site following talks with Dudley Council. It will be built where Cradley High School once stood on land off Homer Hill, in Cradley.

Landowners razed the school to the ground last year after council officials decided to close its doors due to falling pupil numbers.

Midland Heart's director of new business and development, Carl Larter, said: "We are pleased to confirm that we are at the very early stages of developing the borough's third extra care scheme. The proposal at the moment is on the former Cradley High School site and we are currently carrying out preliminary investigations on the site."

Midland Heart has completed the first of its extra care housing scheme in the Russells Hall area of Dudley and the second in Coseley is weeks away from opening.

Arboretum offers a fruity alternative

An autumn delicacy which was popular with the ancient Greeks is in full bloom at a Midland arboretum.

Visitors to the attraction in Arley near Kidderminster have been admiring the quince trees found around the grounds. They are full of fruit, which will be left on the branches until the first hard frosts to soften them before they are cooked. They are often used to make marmalades and as the fillings in pies and puddings.

Curator of Arley Arboretum Pete Howells said: "We have trees that smell like candy floss in the autumn, trees that may be totally unique to the arboretum and brilliant examples of ancient exotica such as the quince."

Concert date to mark 50 years

A concert is to be held to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Wall Heath Community Centre. It will take place on October 7 at the Enville Road facility and will feature singer Maggie O'hara and comedian Doug Parker. Tickets cost £6 and are available via 01384 296506.



Gardener Adrian Thomson and arboretum curator Pete Howells with the quince trees and fruit

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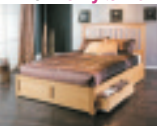
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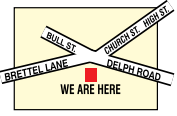


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thechronicle

Proposed traveller sites are dropped

dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Around 200 protesters flocked to a public meeting over controversial plans for new gypsy and traveller sites in Wyre Forest – and spoke of their delight when more than half of those sites earmarked were scrapped.

Campaigners packed the meeting of Wyre Forest District Council's cabinet on September 20, held to decide how many out of 15 suggested sites would progress to a full consultation. It was the second time in two days the issue has been discussed.

Concerns still remain, however, over the remaining sites.

On September 19, around 400 concerned people packed into a meeting of the council's overview and scrutiny committee at Stourport Civic Centre and heckled councillors who only let just five of them tell of their worries.

During the September 20 meeting, councillors agreed to drop eight out of the possible 15 sites which had been earmarked to become home to gypsy and traveller pitches and put the other seven out for consultation. Residents in the areas that have been dropped from the list welcomed the news.

Welcome

Peter Chatterley, a resident living near a site in Clows Top which is now no longer being considered, said: "We welcome the opportunity to provide sites for communities but it should not be to the detriment of the community that is already in place."

Glenn White, also a resident in Clows Top, added that the village, which had only two small shops, no doctors, vets, dentists or public lighting, could not support a travellers' site.

Peter Smith from Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council spoke out at the meeting against a site in Fairfield which was also dropped from the list.

He said afterwards: "It is good news, I thought we had a strong case."

But concerns were raised that those left now have a much greater chance of being included on the final site list.

Councillor Fran Oborski told the meeting: "It is effectively saying unless someone comes up with some more sites, the odds are your site is going to be chosen."

During the meeting council leader John Campion announced plans to hold a public meeting for each of the sites which remain under consideration.

Lighting up art world



Kari Moodie – glass interpretation officer at the museum

Striking glass artwork featuring neon lighting has gone on display at a Kingswinford museum. Light Fantastic has opened its doors a few days ago at the Broadfield House Glass Museum and will be running until February next year.

Work from contemporary artist Tracey Emin will be on loan from the White Cube gallery in London as part of the exhibition.

Also featured is the work of Sarah Blood, Sharon Foley, Jessica Lloyd-Jones, Keith Brocklehurst, and Richard William Wheeler. The piece by Keith Brocklehurst, who is also head of glass at the Ruskin Glasshouse College in Ambleside, is inspired by ancient cultures, while Wolverhampton-trained Sharon Foley uses domestic items to explore challenging issues.

Kari Moodie, glass interpretation officer at the museum said: "There are six artists featured and they are showing how neon is used in art. It is normally seen in advertising and signage but the artists are all using it in different ways." Admission is free.

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Expansion on the horizon for leading window firm

ENERGY Seal, in Planetary Road, Wednesfield, has a 20-strong workforce, striving to be the very best at what they do in all aspects of the industry.

And despite the shrinking economy, the local company has grown to become one of the leading manufacturers of uPVC windows, doors and conservatories in the West Midlands – so much so that the company is looking to expand in the near future, creating more jobs.

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"In our showroom, we have six full-sized conservatories fully-fitted with fixtures and fittings to show our customers exactly what they're buying. "Energyseal is also looking to create more jobs in the local area."

Richard, trade director, adds: "When we started manufacturing, we had three employees. Three years on we now employ 10 fabricators, two fitting teams and six office staff."

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Jane Carter, operations manager, looks out over the vastly expanding uPVC company



Kathy Davidson, accounts manager, and projects coordinator Katy Goldson, keeping up with the day-to-day running of the business at Energy Seal, based in Planetary Road



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thechronicle

Villagers mystified over postbox move

A postbox that has been the target of thieves in the past has been removed permanently – leaving some residents facing an extra mile on their journeys to post letters.

Residents living in Vicarage Road, Ambicote, were left puzzled when the box, which had previously been fixed to a telegraph pole, suddenly disappeared.

It was originally thought the box had been stolen as two previous ones there had been taken.

But inquiries by councillors revealed the box had been removed by the Royal Mail itself. And bosses have now said it would not be replaced.

Councillors for the area said it was making life extremely difficult for many elderly residents who will now have to travel into Stourbridge town centre, more than a mile, just to post a letter.

There is no post office in the area as it was closed years ago as part of cost-cutting measures.

Inconvenience

Councillor Pat Martin said it had created a major inconvenience for people living in the area.

"The box was simply removed without any explanation or warning," she said.

"I know other post boxes there have been stolen in the past and many thought it had happened again when the box was missing."

"We simply do not know why the box has been removed but will be demanding officials replace it."

Royal Mail spokesman Richard Hall said the firm had removed the post box and said the decision had been taken not to replace it.

"Having taken into account the theft of this box on two previous occasions and the provision of post boxes in the area the company has taken the decision not to install a replacement," he said.

Classes to teach the arts

A new arts venue opening in the heart of Netherton next month is offering workshops in arts and crafts for adults and families.

Artspace is a partnership between the Netherton Regeneration Group and Dudley Council.

The project will be based at the Savoy Centre, Northfield Road and follows the success of similar schemes in Dudley and Brierley Hill town centres.

The workshops are provided by Dudley Council's adult and community learning team and cover subjects such as introduction to watercolours, creative art, jewellery making, cupcake design and family crafts.

Visitors can find out more and sign up for workshops at an open day on October 1. The first workshops start on October 6.

Councillor Adrian Turner, said: "The staff at the Savoy Centre are very friendly and welcoming and the workshops are a great opportunity to try out a variety of arts-related subjects as well as learning new skills."

Applications for courses

Dudley College has opened to applications for the new finance and cookery courses, which are designed to help improve basic numeracy and literacy skills in day-to-day situations.

Director of learning at the college, Bob Chapman, said: "Ultimately we want to provide our learners with the skills they need for their work and home life."

For more information or to enrol, call 01384 363363 or visit the college website at www.dudleycol.ac.uk

Jazz stars to perform at festival

Two world-renowned jazz musicians will take to the stage as part of this year's Bewdley Festival, promising audiences a rousing night of live jazz and classic pop.

Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, a pianist who has performed on film scores such as *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and *Far From the Madding Crowd*, will take to the stage with Claire Martin, who won the British Jazz Award for best vocalist.

They will be at the Ramada Hotel, Habberley Road on October 10. They will perform the music of Irving Berlin, who has written the scores for 19 Broadway shows and 18 Hollywood films, earning eight Academy Award nominations.

Tickets are £17, available from the festival box office at Huntingdon Hall in Crown-gate, Worcester, and the Bewdley Tourist Information Centre in Load Street, Bewdley. The festival begins on September 28 and ends on October 16. Visit www.bewdleyfestival.org.uk

Lisa breaks into the top 100

Black Country schoolgirl tennis star Lisa Colling has smashed her way into the top 100 girls in England, Scotland and Wales after winning the Staffordshire singles championship.

Lisa, who lives off Burton Road, Dudley, and trains at Tipton Sports Academy and the David Lloyd centre, Dudley, is now number 56 in the national Lawn Tennis Association rankings for girls aged 12 and under.

The 12-year-old, whose heroes are Rafael Nadal and Maria Sharapova, has been playing the sport since the age of four and is on court at least six days a week.

Title

Her mother Claire Colling – herself a ladies "A" team player at Wall Heath Tennis Club – said: "She's so tennis-mad that forcing her to take a break is high on impossible."

Lisa recently clinched the LTA 12-and-under Staffordshire County Girls Singles title.

That win catapulted her from 131st in the national rankings to 95th.

Her coach at Tipton Sports Academy, Kieran Beattie, said: "Long-term I think she has a bright career ahead."



The Black Country's Lisa Colling is currently ranked among Britain's top 100 girl tennis players

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Belbroughton Spinners Nancie Mole, left, and Lindsay Welch get dressed up for the event



An Abbey Crow-ed - Belbroughton's tribute to The Beatles

Villagers not scared to crow about their efforts

LADY Gaga, The Beatles, Jedward and N-Dubz were among the famous faces immortalised in hay and straw at this year's Belbroughton Scarecrow Festival.

Up to 20,000 people flocked to the quiet village, situated near Stourbridge, to take part in the annual event, with around 150 scarecrows dotted around styled up to represent this year's theme of pop stars.

Jan Hadley, who is on the organising committee, said that despite the downpours of rain throughout

Sunday, the crowds had still turned out.

"We had quite a few Jedward figures - possibly because their hair-style is quite easy to recreate in straw," said Mr Hadley, aged 45, of Bradford Lane, Belbroughton.

"There were also a lot of Sheryl Crows, a Noddy Holder and even two sheep called Ewe One and Ewe Two, to represent U2.

"It was an excellent weekend and everyone seemed to have a lot of fun." Local butcher Charles Jordan, 60, was among those who joined in and

enjoyed the fun of the event. He entered a butcher-styled scarecrow with a loaf of bread on his head - as Meatloaf.

"I do get involved every year - it's a good event which brings the whole village together," he said.

"I always try and do something a bit silly, it's all good fun."

The children of St Mark's School, Pensnett, also contributed to the day's occasion.

They supplied 10 scarecrows to take part.

Among them was Dudley's own X Factor hero Wagner.

Among the other activities taking place was a demonstration of shire horses ploughing a field, a classic car show, falconry display and the Belbroughton Spinners.

They spun wool on traditional wooden spinning blocks dressed as scarecrows.

The festival began life in 1998 as a way to raise money for repairs to the church tower, but now it rakes in so much money it also helps fund the parent-teacher association at Belbroughton Primary School, the recreation centre and other good causes in the area.



Butcher Charles Jordan with his Meatloaf scarecrow



Tribute to Ozzy Osbourne - the Prince of Darkness



Brian Hay - a tribute to Brian May of Queen



The straw lady - a tribute to Lady Ga Ga



Katie Hartshorne and Anna Pybus, both aged 12, with their scarecrows



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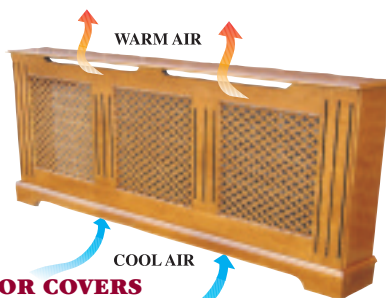
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On your Door Step

Blackheath has always been a predominantly working class area dominated by modest housing. The town was hard hit by the economic slow-down of the 1970s and unemployment of the early 1980s.

However, in the 1990s the town became more prosperous with improving housing stock and some substantial development in town centre stores and improvement in the road network. A J Sainsbury supermarket was also added to the town centre around this time.

Blackheath has many transport links with buses travelling throughout the borough and Rowley Regis railway station is nearby.

Football team Blackheath Town FC play in the West Midlands (Regional) League Division One (South).

Judas Priest guitarist Glenn Tipton was born



in Blackheath.

With rising traffic on local roads after the Second World War, Blackheath became a congestion hotspot. Things improved slightly with the construction of a new road around the north of the town centre towards the end of the 1970s, but this was only of use to traffic coming to and from Cradley Heath and Brierley Hill. Motorists travelling from Quinton still had to negotiate the original route that was little better than it had been in the days before cars. This problem was solved in 2006 with a new relief road that circles the eastern half of the town centre and diverts traffic coming from Halesowen, Quinton and Oldbury.

Blackheath has some of the strongest public transport links in the Black Country. It has direct bus and rail links with Birmingham, while the extensive bus network gives locals a direct route to Oldbury, Halesowen, Dudley, Cradley Heath, West Bromwich and Walsall.

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HALESOWEN
AND SURROUNDING AREAS

On your Door Step

Welcome to Halesowen

Standing on the border of the Black Country and Birmingham, Halesowen dates from Saxon times and boasts a fascinating wealth of history, set alongside excellent shopping, business and entertainment facilities.

If you haven't visited this bustling town for a while, you'll immediately see plenty of change, yet Halesowen still retains the character and feel of the village it once was.

Leasowes Park

The area is surrounded by some beautiful countryside. The ruins of the 13th century Halesowen Abbey are just outside the town, as is The Leasowes. Originally laid out by the 18th century poet, William Shenstone, it was one of the first natural landscaped gardens in Europe.

The Shenstone Way links the town centre with Leasowes Park and takes you through this wonderful landscape. Walks led by the wardens occur every couple of months.

Halesowen, Blackheath, Cradley Heath

Halesowen town centre is dominated by the parish church of St John the Baptist which dates from 1083. Shoppers are spoiled for choice with many big name stores in the High Street and the covered Cornbow Shopping centre, and there's a Farmer's Market on the second Saturday of every month.

The neighbouring centres of Cradley Heath and Blackheath also have a wide variety of lively shops and thriving markets making them well worth a visit. When it all gets too much, take time out from retail therapy in the area's friendly pubs and restaurants.

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On your Door Step

Once again it has been my pleasure to unearth a few **Local Gems** that may otherwise go unnoticed in the bustling 24/7 society we now live in.

There are many businesses who are striving to deliver the quality, service and value we tend to associate with yesterday. They continue to deliver the buying experience we so rarely receive. The Old Bush Revived being a prime example, not a themed pub or a sports bar, but a good old fashioned Proper British Pub, a concept that seems to have become all but extinct in the modern era. No tricks or gimmicks, just a well thought out and executed set of standards that is a bench mark for any establishment in this trade. It is a place where you can thoroughly relax and enjoy your environment, whether inside or outside in the beer garden, in fact you'll find it hard to drag yourself away. This mini haven forces you to chill with something cold and refreshing to hand. All of the advertisers on these 2 pages are companies who continually strive to deliver an unrivalled customer experience, but at the same time maintain their individuality and total commitment to being the best at what they do. So next time you are looking for any of the products and services available on these pages, do try them out, you be the judge, they are all there to serve you and will remain there, and with your support, will continue to thrive in these times of austerity and recession.



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Advertisement Feature

The Old Bush Revived, Refurbished and Revitalised

In October last year the Old Bush Revived was in a poor state to say the least, the Pub was closed and badly in need of attention, in fact the garden area was nothing less than a dumping ground that resembled a bomb site.

The transformation that has taken place since December last year when new owners Louise Carroll and John Priest re-opened the pub has been incredible. The Pub has been totally refurbished from top to bottom, inside and out and life has been breathed back in to the popular Rowley Regis establishment. Louise and John bought the freehold last year and set about returning the place to its former glory, in fact they didn't stop there, they went way beyond, not just in the standard of the refurbishment but also with the quality and detail they put in to the way the pub runs and functions in all aspects of its day to day operations.

It's no surprise really, when you look into Louise's background

this "Rowley" girl has the pub trade deeply imprinted in her DNA. Raised as a child in The Grange which her parents ran, Louise went on to be the Licensee at the Fountain Inn in Tipton. After devoting 10 years of her life to the place the decision was taken to sell up and return to her roots and so the Old Bush was truly "Revived".

The first thing that hits you when you enter the place is the total attention to detail that has been applied, not one corner has been left untreated and the cleanliness is second to none. The ambience is that of a proper pub, one that harks back to an era when pubs were the genuine centre of the community and, in the words of the song, a place where "everybody knows your name".

There are no tricks, no gimmicks or trends that have created this, just a clear vision of what a pub should be and a determination to deliver on every level. The philosophy is simple; everything is geared to customer's relaxation, comfort and enjoyment.

The Pub has a range of cask ales and regular

guest ales to satisfy the growing demand for niche brands, and if you happen to be there during either of the "double happy hours" (11.00 - 1.00 lunchtime or 5.00 - 7.00 in the evening) you can benefit from 10p of any pint of draft.

The food menu is compact but varied, incorporating the best of British fayre with a few international dishes to add to the flavour. The bulk of the food is prepared from scratch on the premises incorporating the best of fresh produce sourced locally. The fact that this is all produced to such a high standard does not mean that it is accompanied by a hefty price tag. The "Specials" menu enables you to buy 2

steak meals with chips, peas and side salad for just £7.99. There is also a kids menu, a Sunday carvery menu and during the summer and bank holidays a BBQ menu served in the immaculate beer garden, which wouldn't look out of place at the Chelsea Flower Show. The cleanliness



and attention to detail referred to earlier is backed up with accreditation, the pub boasts the highest standard (level 5) hygiene award but the certification is to some degree redundant as the quality and attentiveness is in everything they do.

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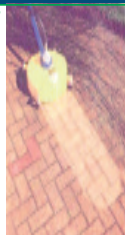
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ON YOUR DOORSTEP

thechronicle

Uncorking the facts on finding good wine

When choosing a bottle of wine, there are three "Ps" to consider – the price, your preference and its pairing.

The price you are willing to pay (or not pay) for a bottle of wine is a key determining factor in selecting a wine that is right for you. Gone are the days when you could only buy a "good" bottle of wine for a high price.

There are plenty of very reasonable great wines available on half price or reduced offers, so it's worth searching around.

Then there's your preferences.

We all have them and they often change in a moment's notice, but with wine preferences let them be swayed by what you will be drinking them with or who you will be sharing them with.

For example, if you are hosting a happy hour get together, your preferences might lean towards "safe" reds and whites.

For people who may not be accustomed to heavier-bodied, heartier wines, buy a softer merlot or pinot noir.

Different

For a white, look out for a refreshing gewurztraminer, but if you are looking for something a little bit different, then talk to your local wine merchant about wines, styles and labels, that you have enjoyed in the past and asking for specific recommendations should provide sufficient direction for another great find.

If you are new to wines and are looking for a few suggestions – try a riesling, gewurztraminer, or a muscat dessert wine if sweeter wines suit your fancy. If you prefer a dry white wine, then grab a pinot blanc, chardonnay, pinot gris or sauvignon blanc.

As for reds, starting with a gamay, pinot noir, or merlot if you do not want anything too complex or full-bodied. If you are looking for something a little different, then go with a Californian cabernet sauvignon, syrah (or shiraz if its from Australia) or a zinfandel.

And lastly, onto pairing. If you are looking for a wine specifically to pair



There's no need to pay over the odds to get a bottle of wine you really enjoy

with a special dinner party, then take into account what the key ingredients will be. Will it be white or red meat? Will you be using fresh or dried herbs and what types? Will the dish be spicy or fruit-filled?

In general, white wines go with lighter flavored meals really well; while, red wines often complement heartier meals a bit better.

If you're really stuck, go for pink and get the best of both worlds.

The choice of wine is all a matter of personal taste – but there are five main grape varieties and the aromas frequently associated with each might give you a clue to the taste.

Wines differ according to origin, grape variety, technique of manufacture and age. Origin is the most important clue to

a wine's character and what they taste like.

The grape variety used in a wine has assumed major importance since New World wine lands such as California and Australia arrived on the scene. These lands generally label and name their wine according to the name of the grape, a trend that has spread back to Europe.

When choosing a bottle of wine you should ask yourself if you want a cool thirst-quencher or a wine to sip and savour? Do you want an everyday wine for an informal occasion, or a serious bottle for an important dinner?

So much choice can be daunting, but with a little help, you'll find the ones you enjoy and be talking about them like a master sommelier.

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thechronicle

WBOS hope their massive flop turns out a big success

FROM Broadway to the office on 0844 871 3011.

Brum and the Black Country, Mel Brooks' outrageous satirical comedy musical *The Producers* is being staged by West Bromwich Operatic Society in Birmingham this autumn.

It tells the story about an eccentric producer and an accountant who set out to pull off a big money scam by attracting investment for a Broadway show – and then ensuring it is nothing but a critically-slammed flop, by making it as awful and in as bad taste as possible.

The show will run at the New Alexandra Theatre from November 22 to 26.

Tickets costing £12.50 to £22.50 are available from the society on 01384 377402 or the theatre box

Meanwhile, The Highbury Players are performing ripping yarn *The 39 Steps*, at the Highbury Theatre Centre in Sheffield Road, Sutton Coldfield, until October 1. Call the box office on (0121) 373 2761.

West Bromwich Operatic Society members Nicolas Sullivan, John Weatherall, Jake Sharp, Debbie Cook and Dave Storey with Simon Pugh, Rachel Davies and Leon Davies rehearse their latest show *The Producers*



REVIEWS

Echo and the Bunnymen, Symphony Hall

INFLUENTIAL Liverpoolian rockers Echo and the Bunnymen are more used to sweaty rock venues than the rarefied surroundings of the Midlands' premier classical musical venue, the Symphony Hall.

Even singer Ian McCulloch, not normally known for his humility, said it was a "privilege" to play in such a prestigious "gaff", adding in his Scouse brogue that he was "made up".

The Bunnymen had made an effort to fit in. A six-piece string section began the evening with a programme that ranged from Bach to The Beatles (a pleasant arrangement of *Something*) and, most popular with the audience, a treatment of Joy Division's *Love Will Tear Us Apart*. Interesting to hear The Beatles at a Bunnymen gig, McCulloch in his pomp would probably have described them as the second best band out of Liverpool. The Bunnymen took the stage in a mist of dry ice and warmed the audience up with some of their more recent songs, including the stirring *The Fountain*, until *Bedbugs and Ballyhoo* and the frenetic *Never Stop* took the gig up a gear, leading to a rousing *Rescue* from their 1980 debut album *Crocodiles*. The all-female string section added an extra dimension to the sound and Will Sergeant's spine-tingling guitar work reminded listeners that he ranks as one of the best guitarists from the 'new wave' era (alongside Johnny Marr and The Edge). The second act was given over to a track-by-track performance of their *Ocean Rain* album, introduced by McCulloch as "the greatest album ever made" and climaxed with the gothic romance of *The Killing Moon*. Mac the mouth, back to his immodest best, introduced it as the "greatest song ever written".

Leon Burakowski

Lee Evans, Birmingham NIA

YOU get the impression Lee Evans could go through a two and a half hour set saying absolutely nothing and he'd still get more laughs than most comedians.

A sell-out 13,000-strong crowd at Birmingham's NIA certainly didn't need much encouraging as they lapped up the laughs during Evans' latest arena show, *Roadrunner*.

Evans, who has been touring for more than 20 years, may not be the wittiest stand-up on the circuit, nor does he have the best one-liners or a killer comedy persona. But for imaginative, honest, energetic, brilliantly physical comedy, there is no one better.

Roadrunner was written in the second city during a six-month stay on Broad Street and then rehearsed and polished in Birmingham's tiny Glee Club.

If nothing else Evans used his time to perfect his Brummie accent, which was regularly used when regaling the idiocy of people from his thoughts and stories.

Airports, holidays, footballers, Ikea and the recent riots all got the inimitable Evans treatment in what was a jam-packed, unrelenting set which very rarely failed to reach his incredibly high standards.

The best material though, as ever with Evans, was reserved for the subject of his long-suffering wife, with their rows about her putting make-up on and him having to fix a car on the side of the road getting the biggest laughs of the night. Two songs, including old favourite *Bohemian Rhapsody*, polished off the evening before a standing ovation had Evans gushing with thanks.

All delivered, of course, with that unforgettable chimp-like face of elasticity; if all else fails, he's got that to make us laugh for a long time yet.

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Alan to head the comedy capers

THE COMEDY highlight of the next week will be that chatty man Alan Carr's two nights at Birmingham NIA over the weekend, October 1 and 2.

But there are also laughs to be had in Wolverhampton with Russell Kane at the Wulfrun Hall on Sunday (Oct 2) and Hal Cruttenden at The Slade Rooms on Tuesday (Oct 4).

Meanwhile, the much-loved comedienne and actress Beryl Reid will be remembered in Roll Out The Beryl at the city's Arena Theatre tomorrow night (Friday, Sep 30). Expect a guest appearance from her marvellous Brummie character Marlene.

Perky

Camp humour and music combine in pink and perky hit show Legally Blonde The Musical. The touring version of the West End hit arrives at Birmingham's New Alex on Tuesday and runs until October 15. It's a great girls' night out.

The Real Deal Comedy Jam brings American stand-up star Cocoa Brown to the Alex on Saturday as part of a five comic bill.

Birmingham Royal Ballet performs its sumptuous version of Beauty and the Beast at Birmingham Hippodrome until Sunday, and there is Chinese circus at Wolverhampton Grand with Shanghai by Cirque du Ciel.

Classic drama follows at the Grand with the West End version of First World War drama Journey's End from October 4 to 8.

There's no show like Slava's Snowshow



Slava Polunin creates a dream-like world which amazes young and old alike

UNLESS you caught one of his previous rare visits to the UK, you will have seen nothing else quite like Slava's Snowshow, the dream-like creation of brilliant Russian clown Slava Polunin.

The France-based entertainer tours the world with his unique and spectacular production, last seen in Birmingham several years ago. But he is bringing his company of clowns back for performances at Birmingham Hippodrome from November 9 to 13.

Slava's vision of clowning is light years away from the tired old big top stereotype. Once seen never forgotten, his show creates an alternative world of strange, surreal beauty where very peculiar things happen, such as a coat and hat stand getting a life of its own or a blizzard happening indoors.

Awards

Slava Polunin was influenced by such artists as Charles Chaplin and Marcel Marceau and he himself went on to influence some of Cirque du Soleil's greatest flights of fancy.

Slava's Snowshow has garnered a shelf full of awards and has been performed in 120 cities in 30 countries to more than three million spectators, and his latest UK visit will include a season at London's Royal Festival Hall.

Few productions really deserve the description 'magical' but Slava's Snowshow does, especially in the famous finale when the audience are united in child-like glee as giant bouncing balls are released into the auditorium.

Tickets are priced at £14 to £30. Special discounts for families available at certain performances. Tickets available on 0844 338 5000 or online at www.birminghamhippodrome.com. Calls cost from 5p per minute and a five per cent booking fee applies.

Cinema date for Black Country Communion

FOR one night only, on Tuesday, November 1 at 7.30pm, 15 Vue Cinemas nationwide – including Birmingham – will screen Black Country Communion's debut concert film Live Over Europe in high definition and Dolby 5.1 Surround Sound.

Black Country Communion is the Anglo-American rock group featuring the talents of Cannock-raised bassist/vocalist Glenn Hughes

(Deep Purple, Trapeze), blues rock guitarist/vocalist Joe Bonamassa, Dudley-born drummer Jason Bonham (who followed his father into the Led Zeppelin drumseat), and keyboardist Derek Sherinian (Dream Theater).

Live Over Europe was filmed using 14 HD cameras during BCC's first world tour in the summer of 2011. Recorded across three nights in Hamburg, Munich and Berlin, the

band's set includes 18 songs taken from both of BCC's albums, 2010's eponymous debut, and this year's follow-up album release 2.

This one-night-only cinema experience includes an exclusive filmed introduction from all four members of the band. By pre-booking tickets via www.myvue.com/bcc fans will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win a guitar signed by the band.



Concert - Black Country Communion

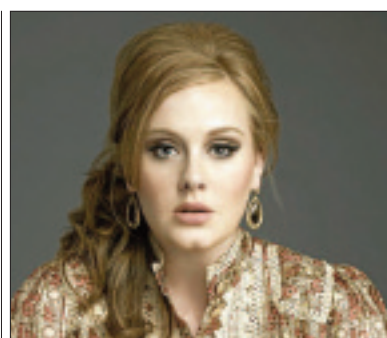


Chart sensation Adele will play at the Civic Hall

Adele's concerts are rescheduled

SINGING sensation Adele has rescheduled her two Wolverhampton Civic Hall dates which were postponed due to her chest infection.

The Londoner, whose second album 21 has been a global success, has rearranged six of her UK tour dates from earlier this month for November. The rescheduled Civic dates will now take place on Monday and Tuesday, November 7 and 8. Tickets for September 10 remain valid for November 7 and September 11 tickets for November 8.

Should the rescheduled dates be unsuitable, face value refunds are available from point of purchase on return of tickets. All enquiries to Midland Box Office on 0870 320 7000.

Pumpkins carving out new UK tour

INFLUENTIAL Chicago rock band The Smashing Pumpkins are back on the road and will close their week-long UK tour in November with a gig at Birmingham O2 Academy on Saturday, November 19.

The band featuring singer and guitarist Billy Corgan, guitarist Jeff Schroeder, bassist Nicole Fiorentino and drummer Mike Byrne made an immediate impact in 1991 with their platinum-selling debut Gish. In a career selling 30 million albums they also released Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness, Siamese Dream and Adore, before returning in 2007 with sixth album Zeitgeist. Of their new music, Corgan says: "It harkens back to the original psychedelic roots of The Smashing Pumpkins – atmospheric, melodic, heavy and pretty."

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MERLIN

BBC1, 7.50pm

In the first of a two-part opener, the eponymous spell-caster faces his toughest challenge yet when Morgana's single-minded determination threatens not only Arthur's future, but also the balance of the world. With her power stronger than ever, the sorceress summons the mighty Callibans to rip open the veil between the between the real and supernatural world. The look is terrifying as demonic beasts pour forth, killing everyone they touch. With Uther a shadow of his former self, Arthur and his loyal knights are left to protect the kingdom. The cast includes Colin Morgan, Anthony Head and Richard Wilson.

9.00 Breakfast **9.30 Saturday Kitchen Live** **10.00 Nigel Slater's Simple Cooking** (F) **10.30 BBC News** **Regional News** **Weather** **11.00 Football Focus** **11.30 Film: God II: Living the Dream** (2007) Football drama starring Kuno Becker. **12.00 Sport: Some of the Hare** **12.30 A Question of Sport** (F) **1.00 Celebrity MasterChef** **1.30 First Score** **1.50 BBC News** **Regional News** **Weather** **2.30 Celebrity MasterChef**

9.00 Saturday Come Dine With Me Bruce Forsyth and Tess Daly host the second of this weekend's two live shows, as seven more couples take to the floor with either a one-dish or a two-dish challenge.

10.30 Doctor Who: The Time Lord makes his final journey to the shores of Lake Silencio in Utah. Last in the series.

11.00 The Hub New series. Part one of two. Cameratic attended by creatures from another world.

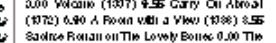
11.30 The Hound of the Baskervilles Two brothers answer questions in the high-tension quiz show hosted by Nick Knowles.

11.50 Comedy: Links recants to desperate measures to help Anne.

9.30 BBC News **10.00 The Hub** **10.30 The Hub** **10.50 The Hub** **11.00 The Hub** **11.30 The Hub** **11.50 The Hub** **12.00 The Hub** **12.30 The Hub** **12.50 The Hub** **1.00 The Hub** **1.30 The Hub** **1.50 The Hub** **2.00 The Hub** **2.30 The Hub** **2.50 The Hub** **3.00 The Hub** **3.30 The Hub** **3.50 The Hub** **4.00 The Hub** **4.30 The Hub** **4.50 The Hub** **5.00 The Hub** **5.30 The Hub** **5.50 The Hub** **6.00 The Hub** **6.30 The Hub** **6.50 The Hub** **7.00 The Hub** **7.30 The Hub** **7.50 The Hub** **8.00 The Hub** **8.30 The Hub** **8.50 The Hub** **9.00 The Hub** **9.30 The Hub** **9.50 The Hub** **10.00 The Hub** **10.30 The Hub** **10.50 The Hub** **11.00 The Hub** **11.30 The Hub** **11.50 The Hub** **12.00 The Hub** **12.30 The Hub** **12.50 The Hub** **1.00 The Hub** **1.30 The Hub** **1.50 The Hub** **2.00 The Hub** **2.30 The Hub** **2.50 The Hub** **3.00 The Hub** **3.30 The Hub** **3.50 The Hub** **4.00 The Hub** **4.30 The Hub** **4.50 The Hub** 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Friday

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BBC2 6.00 *Cheeky*, 7.00 *BBC2*, 8.30 *Cheeky*, 11.15 *The Pink Panther* Show, 12.00 *After Pollock*, 12.30 *GIT wit*, 1.30 *George Galloway*, 2.55 *Conan*, 3.10 *Diamond Murders*, 3.15 *To Buy or Not to Buy*, 4.15 *Weekend Update*, 5.00 *Wanted Under Fire*, 5.35 *Escape to the Country*, 6.10 *Top Gear*, 6.45 *Antiques Road Trip*, 6.50 *Eyeheads*, 6.55 *Stratford Come Daring - It's Back*, 7.00 *The Culture Show*, 7.30 *Antiques Road Trip*, 7.55 *Autumn 2011*, 8.30 *Antiques Road Trip*, 9.00 *Newsnight*, 11.00 *The Review Show*, 11.50 *Weather*, 11.55 *Later with Jools Holland*, 12.55

ITV1 5.00 Daybreak 5.30 Lorraine 6.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show 8.30 This Morning 12.30 Loose Women 1.30 ITV News/Weather 1.55 Regional News/Weather 2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show 3.5.5 The Regional Weather 9.00 There's No Time Like Home 5.00 The Choice 6.00 Regional News/Weather 6.30 ITV News/Weather 7.00 Emmerdale 7.30 Coronation Street 8.00 Love Your Garden 8.30 Coronation Street 8.50 The Regional Weather 9.35 First Alexander (2008) History's Ark: From Britain First 13

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Channel 5 6:00 **Milwaukee** 11:15 **The**
Angry Sam 12:00 **Live with**
Gailly 12:05 **5 News** **Lundtime** 12:15 **Big**
Brother (P) 1:15 **Home and Away** 1:35 **Highland**
2:15 CSI: Miami (P) 3:15 **Rain** **Ordinary Miracles**
2:00 5:00 **5 News** (P) 5:30 **Neighborhood**
6:00 Home and Away (P) 6:25 **CHI** 7:00
5 News (P) 7:30 **5 News** 8:00 **Uxbridge**
9:00 Ultimate Police Interceptor 9:30 **5 News** (P) 9:30
Big Brother: Live Eviction 10:00 **The**
Bachelor 11:00 **Big Brother: The Eviction** 11:00
11:30 Big Brother: The Eviction 11:30 **12:15**
SuperCops 1:35 **Motorcycle Mania!** 2:00 **News**
2:00 2:30 **5 News** 3:00 **5 News** 3:30 **5 News**
County Secrets (P) 5:10 **House Doctor** (P) 5:30
County Secrets (P) 5:35 **House Doctor** (P)

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£775 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, SLATER CLOSE

A very deceptive and modern detached home, close to local amenities, and transport links, comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Two Reception Rooms, En-Suite to Master Bedroom, House Bathroom with Shower, Downstairs WC, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Driveway Parking for 4 Cars, Unfurnished

£725 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, CLEINT HILL DRIVE

A nicely presented modern link detached 3 bedroom house, briefly comprising of: Living Room, Dining Room, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing and Gas Central Heating, Two Parking Spaces and Rear Garden, Unfurnished.

£650 PCM



OLDBURY, SUFFOLK ROAD

A part furnished to suit detached property in popular residential area, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen, Lounge and Separate Dining Room, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking and Garage

£650 PCM



HALESOWEN, SANDERSON PLACE

Located In Hayley Green, is this unfurnished first floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Spacious Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, two Bedrooms, Master with En-Suite, Bathroom and Parking Space. Viewing Highly Recommended.

£650 PCM



HALESOWEN, MIDDLEFIELD AVENUE

Located in Hurst Green is this unfurnished semi detached house, comprising of: Gas Central Heating, 2 Through Lounge/Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Garage and Driveway, Low Maintenance Gardens, Very Popular Area with Viewings Highly Recommended

£595 PCM



OLDBURY, LINKS CRESCENT

Set in a quiet location and having been newly decorated, is this lovely unfurnished mid-terrace home. Comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Very Large Lounge, Fitted Kitchen with Washing Machine, Shower Room, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking

£595 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, HALESOWEN ROAD

An unfurnished mid terrace house modernised throughout briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Utility Room, Downstairs WC, Three Good Sized Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Courtyard Style Garden, Parking to the Rear of the Property and On Road

£575 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, MINCING LANE

A newly refurbished terraced house, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms, New Fitted Kitchen, Utility Room, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Driveway Parking for 2 Cars, Front and Rear Gardens, Unfurnished

£525 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, HABBERLEY ROAD

This lovely unfurnished mid terrace house is located close to local shops, and minutes away from J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Spacious Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, House Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Rear Garden and Off Road Parking

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, LODGEFIELD ROAD

An unfurnished semi detached house, on a popular road, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory, Two Bedrooms, Shower Room, Front & Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking

£525 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, TURNEY ROAD

Located in a quiet cul-de-sac is this unfurnished semi detached house, comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Large Living Room, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, One Single Bedroom, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Large Rear Garden, Ample Driveway Parking. Close to all local amenities

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, CHURCHILL ROAD

An opportunity to rent this unfurnished ground floor apartment, in a Cul-De-Sac Location, on the Hurstons Estate, comprising of: Two Double Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen, Lounge, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Shower Room, Garage En Bloc, Allocated Parking, Own Garden

£495 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAGLEY ROAD

An immaculately presented ground floor one bedroom flat, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre, briefly comprising of: Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower over Bath, Allocated Parking Space, Unfurnished.

£475 PCM



WOOLASTON, SHERWOOD ROAD

Located a short walk from local shops and bus routes is this furnished first floor flat, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living/Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Separate WC, Communal Garden

£450 PCM



OLDBURY, CAUSEWAY GREEN ROAD

This large, split level flat above shops, within walking distance to bus links and close to J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Spacious Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Parking to Rear, Unfurnished

£425 PCM



HALESOWEN, THORNHILL ROAD

A refurbished ground floor one bedroom flat set within a quiet location. Briefly comprising of: Fitted Kitchen, Living Room, One Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Communal Gardens, Separate Garage, Unfurnished

£400 PCM



HALESOWEN, STOURBRIDGE ROAD

A 2 bed unfurnished flat above a shop and within walking distance of town centre comprising of: Living Room, Dining Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Shower Room, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, On Road Parking Space and Rear Garden.

£395 PCM



DUDLEY, BEAN ROAD

A refurbished ground floor flat within easy reach of the town centre, briefly comprising of: Reception Hall with Minton Floor, Lounge, Double Bedroom, Fitted Kitchen, Shower Room, Double Glazing, and Communal Parking, Unfurnished

£380 PCM



HALESOWEN, PIPPIN AVENUE

Located on the popular Homer Hill Estate in Halesowen is this unfurnished first floor flat, briefly comprising of: Living Room/Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Communal Garden

£360 PCM

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The top property guide for Stourbridge, Halesowen, Dudley and Kidderminster

Last chance to buy at new Oldbury site

Just a few chances remain for property-seekers to own a dream home at Taylor Wimpey's fast-selling Beresford Grove development in Oldbury, West Midlands.

The final plots at this exciting new development are now on sale – a trio of stylish apartments and the spacious four-bedroom 'Balmoral' house type – and with all the other properties at Beresford Grove now sold, time has almost run out for house-hunters looking to secure a home here.

Jan Tittley, sales and marketing director for Taylor Wimpey West Midlands, says: "It's no surprise that we've almost sold out of our high-quality homes at this stunning development in such a convenient and well-connected location."

"The final plots are all gorgeous contemporary homes, with price tags that are well within reach for those starting out on the property ladder, whether they're looking for a chic apartment lifestyle, or space for a growing family."

Fast-moving first-time buyers can still get help to step on the property ladder at Beresford Grove with the Government's new FirstBuy scheme.

This fantastic initiative lets qualifying purchasers secure their new home for as little as 80

per cent of the full purchase price – including a 75 per cent mortgage and a five per cent deposit, subject to status – and is available with selected two-bedroom 'Sandringham' apartments and the 'Balmoral' townhouse.

The 'Balmoral', for example, can be accessed by qualifying first-time buyers for 80 per cent of its £156,995 purchase price under the FirstBuy scheme. This fantastic family-size home boasts an integral garage, a spacious kitchen/dining room, a stunning first-floor lounge and four well-proportioned bedrooms, including an en-suite master bedroom – plus flooring included throughout!

Selected

Alternatively, selected 'Sandringham' apartments, priced from just £79,995, are also on offer with FirstBuy, each featuring a bright and airy living/dining room located off the private entrance hallway, plus a separate kitchen, two bedrooms and a main bathroom – and are ready to move into now. With such fabulous deals on the table, anyone hoping to secure one of the last properties at Beresford Grove should act today to avoid missing out.

This popular development enjoys a handy location less than a mile from Oldbury's busy town centre, which boasts



"The final plots are all gorgeous contemporary homes, with price tags that are well within reach for those starting out on the property ladder," says Jan Tittley, of Taylor Wimpey

a wealth of high street shops, pubs and eateries, while a wide range of shopping and leisure facilities can be found in nearby Dudley. Birmingham city centre lies only five miles from home and can be easily reached by car or public transport, with buses running every 10 minutes and a choice of railway stations with frequent services to Birmingham Snow Hill and New Street all within walking distance of the development.

Commuters will appreciate that Junctions 1 and 2 of the M5 are both only a short drive away, providing quick links to the M6, the M42 and the M40, while the Midland Metro tram link makes journeys to Wolverhampton and Birmingham even easier.

For those travelling further afield, Birmingham International Airport is just over 20 miles from Beresford Grove.

To be in with a chance of securing one of the final new homes at Beresford Grove, property-seekers can visit the Sales and Marketing Suite, located off Seymour Road, Oldbury, and open seven days a week from 10am to 5pm.

Alternatively, viewing appointments can be booked by calling the sales executive on 0845 026 3993, or by visiting the website at www.taylorwimpey.co.uk, where

Conservation of buildings

Filming BBC2's hit Climbing Great Buildings TV series gave presenter Jonathan Foyle a he's eye view of some of the UK's most iconic and spectacular structures – including the state of their roofs and gutters! So it's no surprise that he's a passionate and informed advocate of the importance of regular maintenance.

This year he is fronting charitable company The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' (SPAB) annual National Maintenance Week (18-25 November), because he is committed to highlighting the vital importance of maintenance for buildings of all types.

Jonathan, who is also Chief Executive of the World Monuments Fund Britain, says: "In so many areas of life today we've developed a culture of throw-away convenience, with maintenance and repair becoming dirty words. They shouldn't have! Repair encourages building owners to make a gentle, hands-on contribution to their buildings which also contributes to their ongoing history. I repair and repaint my own windows, and enjoy the feeling of having properly looked after the house that shelters my family. Meanwhile, maintenance helps keep alive crafts – such as tiling, metal casting for gutters and pipes, and even specialist skills like thatching – which all help us to keep buildings old and new in good shape."

Now in its tenth successful year,

SPAB's National Maintenance Week (18-25 Nov) aims to provide homeowners throughout the UK with practical tips and advice on how to prepare their building to face the worst that winter can bring. This winter's snow, for example, presented some tricky maintenance challenges in the form of cracked, frozen and burst pipes.

Simple

National Maintenance Week encourages homeowners (and people who care for public buildings such as churches, village halls and local authority properties) to be aware of the simple, economic and achievable maintenance steps they can take at the beginning of winter to stave off costly major faults and damage at a later date. SPAB is Britain's oldest conservation body fighting to save old buildings from decay and dereliction, but the message of National Maintenance Week is relevant to everyone who owns or cares for a property of any sort – whether it's 500-years-old or brand new.

There are practical benefits too, as Jonathan Foyle explains: "For thousands of people, regular maintenance has proved much cheaper than having to remove and replace mass-produced and unfixed features that were supposed to last forever but merely lowered a property's value after making it ugly for twenty disappointing years. I'd offer a three-step plan:

- Take action early
- Watch out for decay
- Keep it original
- And beyond that, in my experience – providing you're properly roped up – clambering on the roof can also offer you a bracing wintry work-out. Everyone's happy!"

SPAB is also showing that good maintenance makes a positive contribution to sustainable living. There's more to sustainability than saving energy. It's about making practical, common sense decisions about our immediate environment – the places where we live, work and meet.

"One of the key questions SPAB will urge people to ask this year when dealing with maintenance is: 'What can I repair, not replace?'" says Jonathan Foyle. "It's a maxim that echoes the words of William Morris on the foundation of SPAB back in 1877: 'Put protection in place of restoration. Stave off decay by daily care.'"

The final of National Maintenance Week, National Gutters Day (Friday, November 25) is also a timely reminder to homeowners that just a few minutes spent clearing weeds and debris, or just a few pounds spent to mend a leaky gutter can save many hundreds, and possibly thousands of pounds!

● Visit www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk to see Jonathan Foyle's 10 top tips on winter property maintenance.



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Your essential guide to the world of motoring compiled by Motoring Editor Sharon Walters

Small price to pay for the wind in your hair

CHOP THE roof off a car and it will probably wobble on rough roads: add a fabric top and it will let in more noise than keeping the tin-top in place, writes Ian Donaldson.

That's simple physics; the trick is to minimise both intruders while giving the punter something stylish for his (and, vitally, her) money. And that's another drop-top factor to consider. They all

By Ian Donaldson

cost more than the hatches they're based on, so will only win over buyers who fall in love with the prospect of a bit of a pose in a less practical car.

Now, after a nine-year break, comes the Golf Cabriolet and, on a first drive on some fine Leicestershire roads in glorious early

autumn sunshine it wasn't hard to make a case for spending the extra.

My test car, picked at random from a tempting line taking in the entire launch range, was the most expensive Golf Cabriolet you can buy, at the moment.

It costs a not inconsiderable £26,595, £3,495 more than the equivalent Golf hatch and tops a range starting at £20,720. Three engines are immediately available (two petrol, one diesel) with three more later in the year.

The theme of threes continues in the number of trim levels (S, SE and GT).

Volume

All of them feature 16-inch alloy wheels, DAB radio and Bluetooth, and a powered roof that whirrs up and down in about the time it takes Usain Bolt to run 100 metres and will perform either action at up to about 18mph – looking ultra cool in the process.

Finding somewhere to stow the top when you want wind in your hair means there's less room in the rear seats than a Golf hatch and the boot is down in volume too.

However, unlike convertibles with bulky metal folding roofs (like the bigger, dearer VW Eos), there's the same space available whatever the position of the top, although reaching into the furthest recesses is a bit like trying to retrieve a parcel posted through a letter box.

But enough of these practicalities, you buy a cabrio as much with your heart as your head, even if the VW badges allows you to pretend you've been a bit sensible too.

Try the cabrio first with roof in place and on a patched British main road and you'll feel the car shimmying slightly as it mourns the loss of stiffness in the cut-about body, while you notice a bit more wind noise than the hatch will provoke.

Let the roof down, however, and let the sun shine in and you'll forgive the car its minor downsides and enjoy the smell of the fields, the twitter of birds in the roadside bushes and the feeling of one-ness with nature that only a convertible can give.

And it doesn't matter if you stray on to the A14, where the standard fit air deflector behind the front seats means there's only a gentle breeze in the cockpit with the speedo showing a typical

A14 cruising speed (go on ,

you guess).

With 160 horsepower from its turbo charged petrol engine and VW's delightful DSG automatic gearbox giving your left leg a rest, this top of the pile cabrio is both swift when provoked and a doddle to drive in congested town traffic.

Never mind that the dash is standard Golf hatch fare.

That means it's sensible, easily mastered and just a touch lacking in flair but promises an uncomplicated relationship with a car that so easily puts a smile on your face.



The Golf Cabriolet – a stylish car with a practical grounding is a sensible choice



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A SELECTION OF OUR STOCK

Reg	Model	Price	Wkly Equiv
07 Reg	BMW 116i SE BMW Silver, Climate Control, Alloys, CD, FSH, 38k	£2495	£49
55 Reg	CITROEN CR 1.4 VTR Black, AC, Alloys, CD, 3-door, Low Insurance Grp 4	£2195	£28
05 Reg	CITROEN XSARA PICASSO 1.6 DESIRE MPV Silver, AC, CD, Insurance Grp 5	£2495	£23
56 Reg	FIAT GRANDE PUNTO 1.2 ACTIVE Red, CD, 5-door, Ins Grp 2, FSH, 47k	£2395	£26
56 Reg	FIAT GRANDE PUNTO 1.4 ACTIVE SPORT Silver, Alloys, CD, 3-door, Ins Grp 3, FSH, 48k	£2395	£26
04 Reg	FORD FIESTA 1.4 FLAME Orange, Alloys, CD	£2295	£19
54 Reg	FORD FIESTA 1.4 TDCI ZETEC Diesel, Gold, AC, Alloys, CD, 30 Road Tax, FSH, 38k	£2695	£24
08 Reg	FORD C-MAX 1.8 ZETEC MPV Silver, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH	£4695	£30
08 Reg	FORD C-MAX 2.0 TDCI ZETEC MPV Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD	£4795	£44
03 Reg	FORD FOCUS 2.0 ST170 Black, AC, Alloys, CD, Leather Sport Seats, FSH	£2695	£17
03 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.4 CL Silver, CD, Low Insurance Grp 4	£2195	£15
55 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.6 TDCI LX ESTATE Blue, Diesel, A/C, CD, FSH	£2695	£24
06 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.6 LX DUAL FUEL Blue, Petrol/Gas, A/C, CD, FSH	£4495	£29
55 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.6 TDCI GHIA Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD	£4495	£29
07 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.8 TDCI LX Red, Diesel, Alloys, CD	£4695	£30
57 Reg	FORD FOCUS 1.6 TDCI ZETEC Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH	£3195	£33
08 Reg	FORD KA 1.3i STYLE Blue, Col coded bumpers, Low tax & insurance, 33k	£2495	£23
55 Reg	FORD STREET MA 1.6i Red, Silver Convertible, Red Leather Seats, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH	£3995	£26
08 Reg	FORD MONDEO 1.8 TDCI EDGE ESTATE Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH, 68k	£7195	£42
58 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i Grey, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£3995	£38
56 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i CLASSIC Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD	£3195	£40
56 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i ESTATE Blue, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, Leather Seats, FSH	£5195	£40
Y Reg	MGF 1.8i VVC CONVERTIBLE, Gold, Alloys, CD, 44k, pix to clear	£2195	£na
53 Reg	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 SE Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD Multi Changer	£2695	£17
04 Reg	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 S Gold, A/C, Alloys, CD	£3195	£21
56 Reg	PEUGEOT 207 1.4 SE Black, AC, Alloys, CD, 5-door, FSH, 34k	£4995	£32
56 Reg	PEUGEOT 207 1.6 HDI S Blue, AC, CD, 5-door, FSH, £30 Year Road Tax	£5195	£33
56 Reg	PEUGEOT 207 1.4 SE Silver, Alloys, AC, CD, 5-door, Panoramic Roof, FSH, 38k	£5195	£33
57 Reg	PEUGEOT 207 1.4 SPORT Orange, Alloys, AC, CD, Low Insurance Grp 4, FSH, 28k	£5495	£35
51 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 2.0i XSI Black, AC, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sports Seats	£1995	£na
53 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i SE ESTATE Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, Roof rails & bars, 67k	£2195	£21
04 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i SE ESTATE AUTOMATIC Silver, AC, Alloys, CD	£2195	£21
06 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6 X-LINE Red, A/C, Alloys, CD	£3695	£24
05 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i HDI 110 SPORT Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD	£4495	£29
55 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i S Red, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 59k	£4495	£29
56 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i HDI 110S Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH	£4695	£30
55 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6i S Black, 2006, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 37k	£4695	£30

MANY MORE CARS IN STOCK

Reg	Model	Price	Wkly Equiv
07 Reg	RENAULT CLIO 1.2 CAMPUS SPORT Blue, AC, Alloys, CD, Low Insurance Grp 3	£2995	£26
56 Reg	RENAULT CLIO 1.6 DYNAMIQUE (New Shape), AC, Alloys, CD, 5-door, Low Ins Grp 3, FSH	£2995	£26
06 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.9 DCI DYNAMIQUE Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof	£3195	£21
05 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Red, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH, 49k	£2695	£24
57 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Blue, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£4695	£30
08 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Grey, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£6195	£40
04 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Cabriolet, Blue, AC, 18in Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof, 45k	£4495	£29
04 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Cabriolet, Silver, AC, Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof, FSH	£5995	£38
04 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.6 DYNAMIQUE MPV Silver, AC, Alloys, CD	£2495	£17
07 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE MPV Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH	£4695	£30
57 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE MPV Gold, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH, 50i	£5495	£33
54 Reg	ROVER 25 1.4 Si 5-door, Black, Alloys, CD, 30k	£1995	£na
07 Reg	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.3 CDTI 16V LIFE Silver, Diesel, A/C, CD, Low Road Tax	£4995	£32
54 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i SXI, Gold, AC, Alloys, CD, Low Ins Grp 3	£3495	£23
54 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i SXI, Blue, AC, Alloys, CD, Low Ins Grp 3	£3495	£23
54 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i SXI+, Silver, AC, Alloys, CD, Low Ins Grp 3, FSH	£3695	£24
56 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i SXI Silver, AC, Alloys, CD, 5-door, 30k	£4195	£28
56 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 CDTI DESIGN Silver, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Seats, FSH	£5695	£36
05 Reg	VAUXHALL TIGRA 1.4i SPORT Convertible, Blue, AC, Alloys, CD, Leather Sport Seats, 44k	£5495	£35
05 Reg	VAUXHALL TIGRA 1.4i EXCLUSIVE CONVERTIBLE, Blue, AC, Alloys, CD, Leather Seats, FSH, 37k	£5995	£38
56 Reg	VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6 ENJOY Blue, AC, CD, FSH	£2695	£24
06 Reg	VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8i VTEC DESIGN Grey, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sport Seats	£3995	£26
57 Reg	VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.9 CDTI EXCLUSIVE Silver, A/C, CD, 48k	£5195	£33
07 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 CLUB 7 seater, Silver, AC, Alloys, CD, FSH, 46k	£5995	£38
07 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.8 CLUB MPV Black, AC, CD, 7 seater, FSH, 30k	£5995	£38
08 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.8i LIFE MPV Black, AC, CD, 7 seater, FSH, 19k	£5195	£40
54 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.9 CDTI CLUB MPV Beige, Diesel, AC, Alloys, CD, 7 seater, FSH	£5195	£40
53 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 2.0 S Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, Full Winter Pack, FSH	£3695	£24
05 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 2.0i S D0 Grey, Diesel, AC, CD, FSH, 59k	£5495	£35
55 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 1.4 S Red, Diesel, AC, CD, FSH, 41k	£5495	£35
55 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.9 SE TDI Blue, AC, Alloys, CD, 12 Months MOT pix to clear	£2495	£na
06 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.2 S 55 Blue, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£4495	£29

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VAUXHALL SIGNUM 1.9 CDTI Auto. 07/56 Reg, Grey Metallic, Sat Nav, Half Leather, AC, Alloys.....	£5795
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TOYOTA PRIUS T3 07 Reg, 5-door, Black Metallic, AC, Alloys, 58k, FSH.....	£7495
AUDI A8 3.2 SE AUTO QUATTRO 06 reg, Black, 4-door, 87k, FSH, ring for full spec.....	£11995

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HONDA CIVIC TYPE S 55 Reg, 5-door, Silver, Half Leather, AC, Alloys, 65k, FSH.....	£4995
RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE CONVERTIBLE 06 Reg, Silver, AC, alloys, 30k, FSH.....	£5295
VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi 57 Reg 3-dr. Blue Metallic, Alloys, AC, 24k, FSH.....	£5495
VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7 SRI SPORT 56 Reg, 3-door, Black Leather, 55k, FSH.....	£5995
VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 TWINTOP 07 Reg, Beige Metallic, AC, Alloys, 63k, FSH.....	£5995
BMW 320 DIESEL SPORT 04 Reg, Le Mans Blue Metallic, AC, Alloys, 6 Speed, 87k, FSH.....	£6495
HONDA CIVIC TYPE R 05 Reg, 3-door, Red, AC, Alloys, 61k, FSH.....	SOLD
MINI COOPER 06 reg, Black/White roof, alloys, 53k, FSH.....	£6495
VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 DESIGN SPORT HATCH 58 Reg 3-dr. Black, AC, Alloys, 38k, FSH.....	£6795
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Vauxhall's Zafira starts a price war



Vauxhall says its new Zafira people-mover will undercut its key rivals being £1,200 cheaper than Ford's S-Max

VAUXHALL has started a people-moving price war with its main rival Ford.

The entry-level version of the new Vauxhall Zafira Tourer will undercut the price of its main rival, the Ford S-Max, by £1,200.

Despite the cost-cutting, the 138bhp Zafira Tourer ES 1.8 will come equipped with an excellent range of kit as standard, including air conditioning, DAB radio, cruise control, MP3 connections, six airbags, a seven-speaker sound system, active headrests and the handy Flex7 seating found in the smaller

Zafira. Longer, wider and more expensive than the Zafira, the Zafira Tourer is designed to be Vauxhall's premier people-mover, with higher levels of luxury, space and equipment.

It uses key components from the Insignia, which seem to include the basic chassis layout.

Safety

The Insignia's platform is a large one, so it's no surprise that the Zafira Tourer is described by Vauxhall as "overwhelmingly airy" inside.

On the outside, it's 19cm longer than a standard Zafira.

In this vehicle, more emphasis is

being placed on safety in the Tourer, with a plethora of driver-assist systems making a first appearance in the new model.

Traffic sign recognition, side blind spot alert and advance park assist - which helps drivers find an adequate parking space and guides them in to it - are among the potential highlights, but they are likely to be extra options.

There will be 1.8-litre and turbocharged 1.4-litre petrol engines, alongside a 2.0-litre diesel engine with three different power outputs.

One of the diesels is an EcoFlex version that emits 119g/km of CO₂, reducing running costs.



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sport

Halesonians stretch unbeaten run

Worcester Wanderers 5 Old Halesonians 16

Old Halesonians continued their 100 per cent record this season with a hard fought 16-5 away win at a much improved Worcester Wanderers.

Almost straight from the kick off a Worcester infringement gave fullback Chris Hooper a successful penalty attempt for the visitors to get off to a 3-0 lead. This early lead for Hales lulled them into a false sense of security as the remainder of the match was a hard fought,

tight affair. Luke Smith was rewarded as he outstripped his opposite number for pace to score out wide. The try was unconverted. Worcester continued to battle hard and always looked dangerous, their efforts being rewarded not long before half time when a good passage of play ended in a well-worked forward try from Geoff Grant.

The conversion was unsuccessful and was followed by another Hooper penalty just before half time and the visitors went in 11-5 up. In the second half Hales gained a quick ball from a line out which eventu-

ally found Smith out wide for the score. The score remained at 16-5 for the rest of the match with Old Hales eventually running out deserved winners.

There were notable contributions from youngster Olly Kealey and good debut from former Dudley Kingswinford man Jamie Ramsay.

After the match captain Richard Taylor, said: "Although we're obviously pleased to remain unbeaten we failed to take the opportunities we'd made for ourselves and gave away far too many penalties."

Stunning scores make perfect preparations for the season

OLD HALESONIANS HOCKEY CLUB Saturday September 24

Old Halesonians 1st 11 West Bromwich 1

Old Halesonians Hockey 1st XI strolled to an 11-1 win against West Bromwich HC. With the game being the last friendly before the season starts, with the side travelling to Aldridge & Walsall next week, it was important that the performance was one of confidence, precision and belief.

This was certainly the feeling before the game, as a well-drilled Hales side prepared for the challenge.

Hales took a controlling start, yet at the half time period the home side had only managed a 2-1 lead.

In the second half however, Hales' fitness levels showed as the visitors wilted. Old Halesonians managed a goal every four minutes as they smashed nine past the West Bromwich defence.

Hales made it look easy in the second half as they were much more clinical in the D; creating space, winning shorts and scoring goals. The 11 goals included a Paul Woodall hat trick, two from Harry Hughes, Josh Randhawa and Graham Knight, with Tom Bulteel and captain Doug Houghton both grabbing a single goal each.

The Old Hales 1st XI will be hoping all their preparation work will pay off when they start the season next weekend.

Old Halesonians 2nds 8 West Bromwich 0

Hales completed their pre-season preparations with an 8-0 win at West Bromwich. Old Hales made a slow start and wasted many chances, only going in one up at the break through a smart finish by Marc Herickx.

Following a positive but constructive half time talk, Hales came out in the second half and were much more clinical in front of goal, with Adam Hill grabbing four for himself and Herickx, Nick Truelove and Tom Underhill also adding to the score.

It could have been more had it not been for some fine shot stopping from West Brom GK. The 2nd XI host Aldridge & Walsall at Great Park, Rubery next weekend.

Old Halesonian 3rds 6 West Bromwich 1

Old Halesonians 3rd XI continued the domination over West Brom with a 6-1 victory over the visiting side.

Hales controlled from start to finish, which left Ade Lockyer pretty much redundant in goal, but he did produce on stunning save from a short corner late on.

The Hales midfield ran the show, and ran riot on the wings. This gave the forwards the simple task of scoring as many goals as you can in the game. Dan Millichap and Nathan Kelly both grabbed two each, with Nic Penn and James Bailey each grabbing one. There was a worrying moment when captain Neil Painter received a stick to the face after a challenge

from the opposition, but apart from that the team came through unharmed. The 3rd XI travel to Streety next week as they get their season underway.

Old Halesonians 5th 5 Old Wulfs 1

Old Halesonians 5th XI beat Old Wulfs 5-1 in their final pre-season friendly. A near perfect display from everyone on the pitch, with a stand out performance from the up and coming junior player Dan Scarrett.

Old Halesonians Ladies side lost a closely fought league fixture 2-1 versus Kings Heath, despite a goal from Suzanne Collins. Old Hales Badgers side also suffered defeat at the hands of West Bromwich, to whom they lost 5-1.

HALAS HAWKS

BOYS LEAGUE

Halas Hawks 9 Kinver 0

After last week's double hat trick, Nicholas Bennett followed up with another four in the U12s match against Kinver Colts. The other goals came from Aseil Yafai (2), Mohammed Mohammed, Joshua Horton and MoM, Mohammed Yafai.

Brierley & Hagley 1 Halas Hawks East 3

The U9s East travelled to Brierley and Hagley and a great effort saw them leading 3-1 at half time then holding on in the second half. The MoM went to Harry Brierley.

Halas Hawks West 0 Withymoor Colts West 2

The U9s West were well beaten 2-0 against a very determined Withymoor side. James Exall had a superb game in goal for Halas pulling off a string of fine saves to keep the score down to 2-0 which earned him the MoM.

Halas Hawks East 2 Halas Hawks West 1

Halas East U10s were down to the bare seven players but started brightly and went in at half time two goals up, both goals coming from man of the match Rickio Fairin-Hall. In the second half Halas West pulled one back. Halas East held on to make it four wins out of four.

Gornal Athletic 7 Halas Hawks West 5

Gornal scored two goals, but Halas took the lead with three goals, only to see Gornal level on the stroke of half time. The lead changed hands throughout the second half. Unfortunately, an excellent hat-trick from Jack Bissell and two from MoM, Josh Beasley, were not enough to keep Gornal out who held on for a 7-5 win.

Halas Hawks 3 Legion Lions 2

Halas took the lead with a Matt Jones penalty, but Legion hit straight and then took the lead just before the break. The second half saw Josh Bernard level the score. Halas' winner then came through Cameron Milne.

Halas Hawks 1 Kewford West 4

The U14s found themselves two down at half time. Kewford went three up before Halas managed to get one back through a Michael Eaton corner, but Kewford sealed a 4-1 win. MoM went to Daniel Jennings

Withymoor 2 Halas Hawks 3

The U15s East were back to winning ways after an entertaining 3-2 victory against Withymoor East. After a scintillating first half, Hawks found themselves two up after goals from Mitchell Tomlinson and Joshua March. Halas were pegged back to 2-2 following some sloppy goals early in the second half, only for March to win it.

Halas Hawks 2 Wombourne 2

Goals from Alex Chappel and Mitchell Wells saw the U17s go into the half time break 2-1 up and heading for an easy win. However, a solid Wombourne side dug deep in the second half and got a deserved equalizing goal which saw the match end in a 2-2 draw.

GIRLS LEAGUE

Halas Hawks 8 Meadow Park 0

The U12s entertained Meadow Park who were playing a boy in goal but still managed an 8-0 win with hat tricks from Lily Atchison and Chloe Alderley, with two from Billie-Jo Handy. Player of the match went to Atchison.

Halas Hawks 3 Withymoor 2

Matches between Halas and Withymoor U14 girls never fail to disappoint and this one was no exception. It was a fairly even game with Halas always able to retain the lead thanks to a superb performance from Amy Blakemore and a hat trick of goals from Sophie Pritchard.

Halas Hawks 9 Bridgnorth 1

A great game by the U15 girls saw them to a comfortable 9-1 win against Bridgnorth Spartans. Alison Downen put away five goals and Danielle Lawrence scored a hat trick, with Abbey Willingale scoring an excellent individual goal.

Halas Hawks 2 Withymoor Colts 4

The U16 girls were three down by half time. After the break a brace from player of the match, Kate Drew pulled the home team back into it but the visitors made the game safe in the closing moments.

LADIES

Halas Hawks 2 Studley 4

The ladies went down 4-2 against Studley. Goals came from Tash Berry and Katie Monk.

HALESOWEN TOWN

YELTZ FOUR-GOAL LEAD GETS WASTED

WIMBORNE TOWN 5 HALESOWEN TOWN 4

The visitors had made a perfect start by racing into a two-goal lead in the opening stages.

Two minutes in Michael McGrath caught the home defence napping with a quickly taken free-kick from the edge of the area which looped home inside the right-hand post.

Naveed Arshad then powered home a close range header past goalkeeper Jason Harvell from a right wing cross to make it 2-0 after just eight minutes.

Pinpoint

Wimborne missed several chances in the first half but Halesowen preserved their lead before adding to it on 53 minutes when

McGrath struck another pinpoint free kick past Harvell.

And five minutes later the game appeared to be all over when clinical Halesowen made it 4-0; Justin Nisbett cutting in from the right to convert a low shot from a narrow angle.

With 26 minutes to go George Webb pulled back what everyone thought was a mere consolation goal for the Magpies by pouncing on a loose ball to finish.

But the game turned with the dismissal of Halesowen's Anthony Bruce for fouling Webb and picking up a second yellow card.

Ten-man Yeltz failed to shut up shop and collapsed catastrophically, with Matt Kemble soon making it 4-2 with a 20-yard

shot. Halesowen's jitters worsened when Webb guided home a third goal following a neat one-two with Jeffes.

Goalkeeper Paul Evans then made a brilliant save to deny Alex Parsons, but he was helpless to prevent Kemble equalising two minutes from the death after Halesowen failed to clear a loose ball.

It seemed Halesowen's misery was complete but astonishingly there was still time for a stunning 94th-minute winner when captain Scott Arnold beat Evans with an incredible overhead kick.

A long and miserable trip back from Dorset followed and the unlikely defeat left the Yeltz in mid table on 14 points from eight games.

David Johnson

Tividale hit high-five for spot in next round

Wellington 0 Tividale 5

TIVIDALE eased into the next round of the FA Vase with a comfortable win over Wellington. The visitors, who included 40-year-old goalkeeping coach Chris Walwyn in between the posts due to injuries, started brightly and forced three consecutive corners.

Defender Joel Kettle then forced his way into the penalty area only to be brought down by Nick Williams but Tividale's penalty appeals were waved aside.

The pressure continued with Brett Clark hitting a dipping volley just wide after a good run by Robert Sargent.

On 20 minutes, Chris Russell forced a good save from Wellington keeper Dan Tecza before the home team had their first shot on goal when the impressive Saul Thomas fired at Walwyn.

Tividale took the lead on 28 minutes when the hard-working

Clark coolly slotted the ball past Tecza from 12 yards. Having gone one up, the visitors began to pile the pressure on a Wellington defence that was beginning to be creak. On 30 minutes, a great run by Ryan Sargent almost led to another goal but his low shot was saved by Tecza.

Swiftly

This effort was swiftly followed by another fine save from Russell while a Simpkins free-kick from 25 yards just cleared the bar.

Tividale were having the vast majority of the play but had two scares within a few minutes shortly before half-time. Firstly, Lewis thudded a header against the crossbar and then Simon Pitt forced Walwyn into a smart save.

The half ended as it had begun with Tividale going close with a couple of fine efforts from Wattlely and Adam Hill.

The second half opened with both

defences on top for the first 15 minutes before Tividale doubled their lead when Adam Hill shot home from after being set up by Wattlely and Russell.

Kyle Hill replaced Kettle on 60 minutes and almost scored after beating Tecza to the ball only to see his effort scrambled away.

The play was by now almost exclusively in the home side's half and Jason Chilton shot just over and then forced another good save from Tecza.

The win for Tividale was effectively sealed in the 75th minute when Russell forced his way into the Wellington box to combine with Kyle Hill, whose pass picked out Clark for an easy tap in.

Two minutes later, it was Hill's turn to get in on the scoresheet. The energetic Russell got the goal his all-round play thoroughly deserved when he thundered the ball past Tecza to round off the scoring.

Sutton left out in the Coldfield

Sutton Coldfield Colts 0 Old Halesonians Colts 22

Old Halesonians Colts travelled to Sutton Coldfield for their third match of the Season

Old Hales started to dominate up front and took the ball up field resulting in prop Orrie Shaw driving through to score under the posts, which fullback Billy Taylor converted.

Then Old Hales continued with some good combinations of forward and back play, forcing a penalty from Sutton from which Billy Taylor added a further three points.

Sutton again, held on to the ball for some time, but from a turnover, outside half Jack Lineham scored with Billy Taylor adding the extras. Sutton pressed again and forced Old Hales to concede a penalty, resulting in a 10 minute Sin Bin for Prop Harry Higgs and the Sutton fullback on the brink of half time.

Old Hales by now had established domination in the scrum and lineout, and it was from one such scrum that the ball was passed out to outside centre Mike Wilkinson, who scored following a 50 metre run. Billy Taylor was unable to make the conversion. Sutton never gave up and continued to mount wave after wave of attack, but the Old Hales scramble defence held until the end. Winger Adam Gillette almost powered over to add a fourth try, but he was tackled metres short of the line and penalised for holding on.

The Halesowen Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford, Shropshire. Thursday, September, 29, 2011.

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Dudley and Walsall **NHS**
Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

2010/11 Annual Report

Foreword

We are pleased to present Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust's Annual Report and Accounts for 2010/11.

This year has been a significant and successful period for the Trust as we have worked hard to strengthen our engagement with service users and carers and progressed with plans to modernise and improve services.

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the Trust over the past twelve months for their tremendous commitment to helping us achieve our vision of being 'Better Together'. This dedication has ensured the Trust continues to deliver high quality mental health services for the communities of Dudley and Walsall boroughs. We look forward to working with our members and other stakeholders over the coming year to build on these successes and improve the mental health and wellbeing of local residents.



Glyn Shaw, Chairman

Gary Graham, Chief Executive

Who we are and what we do

Here at Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust our vision is to be 'Better Together' – delivering flexible, high-quality, evidence-based services to enable people to achieve recovery.

Whether it's treating someone with dementia or helping someone manage their depression and regain the confidence to return to work, we are constantly looking to provide a truly excellent service at every stage of mental illness.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust provides a wide range of integrated mental health services to children, adults and older people across the communities of Dudley and Walsall.

We provide care and treatment for around 20,000 people each year and serve a local population of around 600,000 residents across Dudley and Walsall as well as providing specialised Deaf Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services across Central England.

We employ over 1,200 staff and provide specialist mental health services from more than 40 community sites and 3 acute hospitals: Dorothy Pattison Hospital, Bloxwich Hospital and Bushey Fields Hospital.

The Trust's Vision is one of providing recovery oriented services and in 2010, the Trust published its Clinical & Social Care Strategic Vision that defined how mental health services should be delivered in the future. This Vision has been guided by a growing emphasis on the well-being of the population and a focus on prevention and early intervention. It guides our future plans for mental health services.

Our Vision

Better Together - delivering flexible, high-quality, evidence-based services to enable people to achieve recovery.

Our Values

- Respect and dignity
- Commitment to quality of care
- Compassion
- Improving lives
- Everyone counts
- Working together for patients

Our Successes and Highlights for 2010/11

Throughout the last twelve months we have continued to focus on maintaining the delivery of high quality services, celebrating some key achievements:

April 2010

Achieving full CQC registration - In line with the new Care Quality Commission system of assessment, the Trust achieved full CQC registration. The assessment for registration focused on continuous assessment and monitoring against the essential quality standards. The Trust's registration shows our continued commitment to high quality patient care.



November 2010

Lighting up lives - A new sensory room opened in Bushey Fields Hospital for older adult dementia patients. The state-of-the-art multi sensory room provides equipment specially designed to stimulate the senses and offers patients a safe and relaxing environment to reduce anxieties and stresses. The initiative is an example of the great work that came out of the Dragons Den event held earlier in the year.

May 2010

Innovative Nurses - Mental Health Nurses from across the

Trust took part in our own version of the BBC programme 'Dragons Den' to celebrate Nurses Day. Staff had the chance to present ideas which could help us be more effective as a Trust, improve quality and develop our services.



June 2010

The Trust's Service User & Carer Involvement Strategy was officially launched in June, along with our dedicated Service User & Carer Charters which were developed in partnership with service users and carers across the Trust. The launch of these key documents supports the Trust's continued commitment to engaging with service users and carers.

December 2010

Transforming Services - The Service Transformation Programme team outlined plans for a new service model, alongside the announcement of a new Government Mental Health Strategy, giving us an exciting opportunity to review our current practices and develop a clinical service model that will be service-user centred and really drive quality and improvement.

July 2010

The Trust published its first set of **Quality Accounts** for 2009/10. The publication looked at what we were doing well; where we needed to make improvements; what our priorities were and how we involve service users, carers and staff. It looked forward to how we will strive to improve over the year, and achieve our priorities.



January 2011

Foundation Trust Go!! - In January, the Trust started ramping up its Foundation Trust application. The Board is committed to becoming a Foundation Trust by September 2012. The Trust will continue to keep its stakeholders updated on its progress.

February 2011

Leading by example with health and wellbeing

The launch of our Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy took place with two events at Dorothy Pattison and Bushey Fields Hospitals. This strategy outlined our plans to support, encourage and facilitate good health and wellbeing amongst all of our employees. The events were a great success with staff able to take advantage of the wealth of information and services available for them.



August 2010

Inpatient Hospitals were given top marks!

Our three acute hospitals were inspected and given a rating based on the environment, food and privacy and dignity. The Trust was rated excellent or good on most cases. The results enabled us to continue to look at ways to improve overall standards of patient environments throughout the Trust's sites.

September 2010

Recognising Staff - Our

first 'Recognising Success Awards' were held at Bescot Stadium, Walsall on September 29th. The event was a great day for us to acknowledge and celebrate the success and hard work staff do every day. Our second Annual General Meeting focused on the improvements, successes and developments made over the last twelve months.



October 2010

Accreditation for Memory Service - The Trust received national accreditation for its Memory Service Team based at Bloxwich Hospital, making it only 1 of 14 Memory Services in England to be accredited. It recognised the hard work and continuous development from staff since the service's inception.

New patient record system -

Oasis, the Trust's new patient administration system, went live on Monday 7th March for 280 staff. After months of hard work, training and intense activity to prepare for the roll out of our new patient information system, making sure that patient data and information is captured and recorded accurately.

March 2011

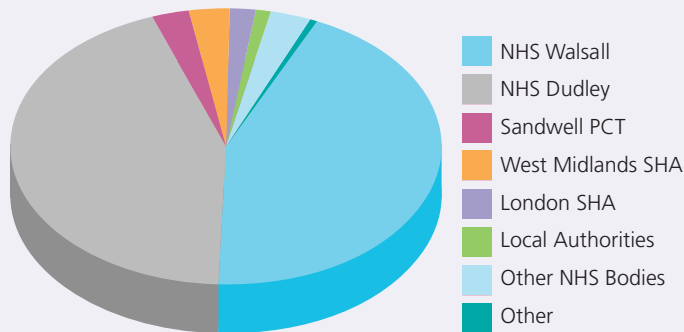
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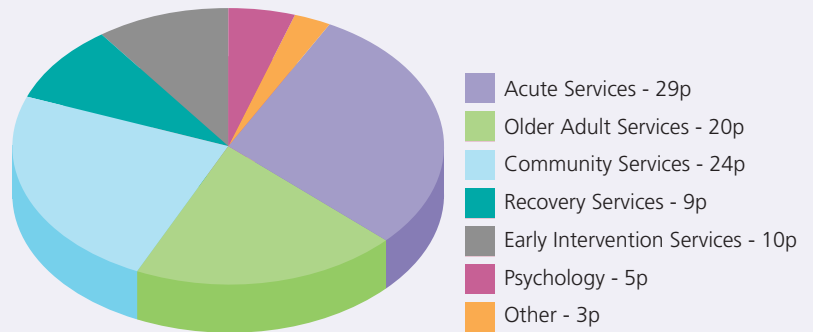
Our Finances

We are delighted to report that the Trust met its statutory targets for the financial year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011.

Where does our money come from?



For every £1 the Trust spends, the following amount is spent on each service:



making tomorrow better *together*

foundation trust

Looking forward to 2011/12

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust is working to become an NHS Foundation Trust. We believe that becoming a Foundation Trust is the best way for us to fulfil our exciting plans for mental health services. It will also allow us to be truly 'better together' as it is the best way for people with an interest in mental health services to become directly involved in influencing them.

Why do we want to become a Foundation Trust?

Foundation Trusts have some major advantages in the way they are run, compared to other NHS Trusts. In particular, becoming a Foundation Trust will ensure:

Better Accountability - service users, carers and our staff will have more involvement in the running of the Trust and delivery of services.

Better Innovation - we will have greater freedom to develop and innovate, using feedback to design services to meet local needs.

Better Influence - we will be able to give mental health a greater presence and 'voice' within the local community.

Better Quality - we will be able to use information and involvement from the community to improve the quality of services.

Better Investment - we will be allowed to create and retain financial surpluses, giving us more freedom to invest in services.

Better Viability - we will be able to focus on efficiency and productivity to ensure that resources are used effectively.



be a part of it - be a member

As part of its Foundation Trust bid, the Trust is now recruiting a membership, which will enable those who sign up to directly influence the way mental health services are delivered. Over 2,000 people from our local communities have already shown their support by signing up as public members.

If you have an interest in mental health and would like to become a member of DWMHPT, all you have to do is fill out a membership form. You can become a member instantly by applying online at www.dwmh.nhs.uk/foundationtrust. Alternatively, telephone **01384 364039** or email ft@dwmh.nhs.uk for a hard copy membership form.

Services Fit for the Future

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust aims to become one of the highest performing mental health trusts in the country with a brand and reputation for excellence that sets it apart from the rest. The Trust intends to achieve this through its exciting plans for Service Transformation, which will improve the care and experience of patients as well as foster efficiency in an economically challenging time.

The Service Transformation programme is committed to improving mental health services by:


- Ensuring that services are re-designed to meet the needs of the local population
- Delivering services based on best practice
- Improving access for service users
- Ensuring that service user's experience is improved
- Delivering cost effective services that offer best value

To achieve these aims we have developed a new and improved service model for the future which will be implemented using a phased approach over a three year period. For further information on the service transformation programme, please contact **Jacky O'Sullivan, ST Programme Director**, by email at jacky.o'sullivan@dwmh.nhs.uk.



Top ten tips for your good mental health

- 1 Do something creative**
Being creative can improve mood, and self-esteem, as well as improving mental agility.
- 2 Learn new skills**
Achieving goals you've set for yourself can increase your confidence and help you to feel more optimistic about the future.
- 3 Value yourself and others**
Spend time to reflect on what you have done well, show your appreciation and take pride in the compliments that you receive.
- 4 Use food to boost your mood**
What you eat and drink can have a real influence on your mood so look out for and choose healthy food options.
- 5 Keep in touch with friends and loved ones**
Research has shown that people whose goals in life are focused on family, friends and colleagues have increased wellbeing.
- 6 Keep physically active**
Exercise has been proven to lower levels of anxiety and depression as well improving fitness levels. 30 minutes of exercise five times a week can make a real difference.
- 7 Care for yourself**
Set aside some time for yourself to do the things you enjoy.
- 8 Get involved and make a contribution**
Being involved in fun events or projects can help you to learn new skills, meet new people and give a great sense of fulfilment.
- 9 Take a break**
Work better, not harder. Make sure you take your annual leave throughout the year, to help you take a well deserved break when you may need it the most.
- 10 Ask for help and share feelings**
If you feel your workload is spiralling out of control, take the opportunity to discuss it with your manager



This publication is available in different formats and languages. If you require a different version, please call 01384 362377. Our Annual Report is also available at www.dwmh.nhs.uk.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

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